AN
ANALYSIS
OF THE
PRINCIPAL DUTIES
OF
SOCIAL LIFE:

WRITTEN IN IMITATION OF

ROCHEFOUCAULT:

IN A SERIES OF

LETTERS to a YOUNG GENTLEMAN,

ON HIS ENTRANCE INTO THE WORLD.

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Qua ratione queas traducere leniter ævum.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO THE READER.

THE following Eſſays are written in Imitation of the Stile and Manner of ROCHEFOUCAULT, ſhort and ſententious, and are illuſtrated by frequent Alluſions and Compariſons. Theſe uſually make ſtronger Impreſſions on Youth, and enforce the Leſſons which they are deſigned to teach, more powerfully and effectually than any other Sort of Reaſoning.

NEW MAXIMS and REFLECTIONS ON THE PRINCIPAL DUTIES OF SOCIAL LIFE.

PREFATORY LETTER.

YOU are now entering into a period of life, wherein the hopes and expectations of your well-wiſhers begin to look for the good effects of that education which, with ſo much expence of time and aſſiduity, you have gone through to the ſatisfaction of your friends.

THE part you have now to act is very different from that you have hitherto been acting. Every ſtep you took was under the immediate direction of precept and authority. Obedience alone was required, and was a ſufficient ſecurity for ſucceſs.

BUT you muſt conſider yourſelf at preſent as one launching into the wide ſea. Unleſs you are provided with all that is neceſſary for a long and dangerous navigation, you are ſure to be ſhipwrecked.

THE difficulties you muſt expect to encounter are numberleſs: they are only to be ſurmounted by prudence and forethought. Of theſe, to ſpeak metaphorically, you muſt lay in an ample ſtore before you ſpread your ſails and venture out of port.

STUDY and learning are but the threſhold of worldly knowledge. It is experience alone that will compleatly qualify you to make an eminent figure, and to diſtinguiſh yourſelf in your ſtation.

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As experience is ſeldom gained unleſs at our own coſt, you are not to promiſe yourſelf an exemption from perplexities and troubles: we are drawn into them through want of ſkill, much more than through imprudence. It is only by going through trials that we learn how to avoid them.

The vigilance of the wiſe does not always prevent them from committing errors, and being entangled in difficulties, from which they find it hard to extricate themſelves.

But let not this be a diſcouragement; it is mentioned only to guard you againſt that ſanguine warmth of ſelf-complacency incident even to the beſt diſpoſitions. Young men who feel a ſuperiority of genius, are ſo apt to found upon it infallible ſucceſs, that when they meet with unexpected obſtructions, they are thrown off their biaſs, and often reſign themſelves to deſpondency.

To be forewarned of obſtacles, enables us to face them with alacrity. When they come upon us unawares, they are accompanied with the additional aggravation of ſurprize; which alone is able to give weight to the ſmalleſt difficulties. By confuſing our minds, it frequently does more prejudice than incumbrances of greater moment that are foreſeen.

Be not, therefore, over-confident in the advantages derived from your education; it has laid a ſtrong foundation, but the ſuperſtructure belongs to time and experience.

Education is like the ſpring, which, after the faireſt promiſes, may be blaſted. How often do we ſee young men, of whoſe future proſperity no doubt was entertained, deceive the expectations that every one had formed in their favour!

Genius is, doubtleſs, in ſome degree, an earneſt of ſucceſs; but if we attend to the

the cultivation of that alone, and neglect thoſe qualifications which the generality of men are more taken with, we ſhall often ſee our inferiors in parts leave us far behind them in the road to fortune.

THE majority of thoſe who have been fortunate, are a convincing proof that a moderate capacity, when accompanied with carefulneſs and diligence, is ſufficient to raiſe a man very high.

BY CAREFULNESS is underſtood, the clear-ſightedneſs acquired by obſerving the behaviour of thoſe with whom we are converſant, and the methods by which they have ſucceeded in their different undertakings.

DILIGENCE is a happy diffidence of meeting with further opportunities, which produces an eagerneſs to ſeize the firſt that offer, and to avoid procraſtination.

THESE two qualities have effected as much as ever uncommon abilities and auſpicious accidents have brought to paſs; and are, in the uſual courſe of things, of greater and more frequent efficacy.

FOR theſe reaſons, endeavour to become poſſeſt of both; and reſt aſſured, that without a large meaſure of them, all other endowments will ſtand you in little ſtead.

THE acquiſition you have made of knowledge in the polite arts, may be compared to a ſum of money levied from the public; which, if intruſted to ſkilful managers, may prove ſerviceable to the ſtate; but if it falls into weak or bad hands, will be waſted, or ſpent to no good purpoſe.

THOUGH you may have ſtored your mind with variety of laudable accompliſhments, you are yet to learn the laſt and moſt important of all leſſons,——the art of uſing them.

THE number of years you have lived, has brought you to the borders of manhood, but the ſtrength of your mind is yet in its infancy.

Now is the ſeaſon to cheriſh and improve it, and to give the finiſhing hand to the work of juvenile years, by ſtudying mankind, and adding practice to ſpeculation.

YOUTH generally compleats us in virtue or in vice; and lays in that ſtock of good or evil which compoſes the reſidue of our lives.

IN order to confirm you in a ſteady adherence to thoſe morals and manners you have been ſo carefully taught, and in a determination to ſhun whatever may contaminate your character, the following Epiſtolary Eſſays are addreſſed to your peruſal. You are to conſider them as a repoſitory of thoſe maxims and ſentiments that are to guide you ſucceſsfully in your progreſs through the world. They are

the laborious reſult of years and long experience, and are founded on a cloſe and continual ſtudy of human nature.

ENDEAVOURS have been uſed to enliven them, by calling in the aſſiſtance of ſuch metaphors and compariſons, as might render them more acceptable to the imagination, and make a ſtronger impreſſion on the memory.

THEY will, it is hoped, prove of ſome utility for your future behaviour and conduct: they will ſerve to point out to your recollection, the rules to be obſerved throughout the moſt material occurrences in life, as an index to a book directs us to the principal paſſages therein contained.

LET-

LETTER I.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION.

WE may begin by obſerving, that youth is the ſeaſon of inſtruction, as manhood is of action, and age of repoſe.

EDUCATION is the manure that brings our innate qualifications to maturity: without it, the ſeeds of virtue and perfection implanted in us, inſtead of fructifying, are loſt or perverted: courage engenders ferocity; the ray of wiſdom that nature may have infuſed, is obſcured, or degenerates into pride; and if we are bleſt with a propenſity to goodneſs, we are liable to perpetual miſtakes and miſapplications.

EDUCA-

EDUCATION, like a paſſport, empowers us to appear in the world with ſafety and credit; by inſpiring a well-grounded confidence, it enables us to act our part with decorum.

A VEIN of rectitude pervades, if one may ſo expreſs it, the notions and ideas of thoſe who have been well educated; it gives them a biaſs to juſtice and propriety, from which they never ſwerve ſo much as thoſe who have been neglected in their younger days.

THE ſentiments and inclinations of a well-educated perſon may, in ſome meaſure, be compared to a tree whoſe branches have been pruned and trimmed by an expert gardener, and which retains in its growth and appearance, ever after, an air of ſymmetry and proportion.

THE beauty of the mind is like agreeableneſs of deportment. The former ſeldom exiſts, unleſs it is formed and faſhion-

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ed in the dawn of ſenſe and reflection; as the latter is hardly attainable, unleſs our juvenile eye has imbibed from conſtant early precepts and practice, a juſt conception of what conſtitutes elegance of behaviour.

THE regularity attending a good education, accompanies us in our more advanced years: by introducing rule and order into our occupations, it enables us to go through much labour with little fatigue.

IT is preciſely the ſame as with an able officer who arrives at excellence in his profeſſion by an aſſiduous conformity to military diſcipline. It is irkſome at firſt, but through cuſtom becomes familiar; and at length incorporates, as it were, with all his motions, in the ſame manner as Cicero tells us the Roman ſoldiers conſidered their armour in no other light than as part of their ordinary dreſs.

By inuring the faculties betimes to a continual exertion of their power, they habitually afford us, on the various emergencies of life, an efficacious and inexhauſtible fund of induſtry and application; which, like a trade learned in the firſt ſtages of youth, we can at all times exerciſe with readineſs and facility.

You cannot too much prize the happineſs that is fallen to your lot, in having received a liberal education. The inheritance that will be tranſmitted by your parents, may render you powerful and conſiderable in the ſociety you belong to, but the influence of riches only goes a certain way: it is limited to our connections and dependants, and ends with our lives. But the ſplendour of cultivated talents ſhines beyond the circumference of our friends and acquaintance; it reflects a luſtre on the country that gave us birth; it ennobles our name, and places us on a level with the firſt characters of a nation. If genius and abilities do not procure wealth,

wealth, they command admiration and praiſe, which, to a great mind, are above all other remunerations.

THESE are periſhable; but the former ſurvive, and immortalize us in the minds of the intelligent part of mankind. Even during life, the preſſures of the world cannot affect us, as they do the illiterate and unenlightened. We view things in their real colours, and are not ſlaves to thoſe prejudices which either create or aggravate calamities. Finally, we die with the pleaſing proſpect of being uſeful to future generations, and with the conſciouſneſs of having filled with dignity the ſpace of time allotted for our exiſtence.

LETTER

LETTER II.

ON

GOOD NATURE AND BENEVOLENCE.

THE firſt leſſon a man ſhould be taught, is that of humanity: make it therefore the principal ſtudy of your life.

A HUMANE diſpoſition is the moſt brilliant characteriſtic of human nature: it is the moſt powerful tie among men of ſuperior ſenſe and generous feelings. It is of the ſame uſe to render them acceptable and partial to each other, in preference to men of coarſer make, as a badge of recognizance in war to diſtinguiſh the different parties.

As we are ſo circumſtanced that none can ſubſiſt in abſolute independence, we ſhould be diligent in learning the art of ingra-

ingratiating ourſelves with others, which can only be done by convincing them we are kind-hearted and benevolent.

We may define humanity, the practical recollection that we are, without diſtinction of perſons, or privilege of condition, univerſally ſubject to the calamities of life; and that reciprocal aſſiſtance is a duty as much incumbent on the higheſt, as on the loweſt members of ſociety.

Fortune ſeems oftentimes to delight in the manifeſtation of this truth, by uſing the moſt humble inſtruments to extricate from their dangers and difficulties the greateſt and moſt mighty of men.

If opulence is our lot, we ſhould never loſe ſight of the principal benefit deducible from it,—the facility of conciliating good will and reſpect through mildneſs and generoſity.

They

THEY to whom Fortune has been partial in the diſtribution of her favours, ſhould conſider themſelves as perſons eſcaped from a ſhipwreck; whoſe duty it is to aſſiſt in ſaving the remainder of their companions who are yet in danger.

A CONTEMPTUOUS neglect of the unfortunate, and an oſtentatious diſplay of the ſuperiority of our circumſtances, flows equally from a mean heart and a weak head. Beſide the injuſtice of making a merit of what is owing to accident, we prepare againſt ourſelves a juſt and equitable refuſal of aid and comfort, in caſe of alteration in our affairs. Men take a juſtifiable pleaſure in puniſhing haughtineſs: ſuch puniſhment is authorized by the law of retaliation, which is alway sexecuted with no leſs readineſs than equity.

TEMPER and moderation in proſperity, are like beautiful ſupporters to the coat of arms of an illuſtrious family.

THEY

THEY are the happy produce of a frequent recollection, that we hold all we have of Fortune by mere courteſy; and, like tenants at will, are liable to be ejected by her mere inconſtancy and caprice.

HOWEVER willing to acknowledge this truth in theory, we ſeem determined to forget it in our practice; as if its abſence from our memory could ſecure us from experiencing its reality and power.

IT is a truth which we ought to fix in the moſt conſpicuous place in our remembrance; like thoſe maxims and ſentences which the nice and ſcrupulous obſervers of the Jewiſh law wore in large written capitals about their perſons.

THE more extraordinary our endowments of mind and body may be, the more they are ſubject to inſtability, from that exquiſite fineneſs of texture which conſtitutes their perfection and beauty.

THE favourites of Nature in this reſpect reſemble the favourites of princes, who, when arrived to the ſummit of their ambitious views, find their ſituation more critical and dangerous than ever, from its exceſſive precarioufneſs and uncertainty.

FROM theſe conſiderations, modeſty ſhould be uppermoſt in our thoughts and actions: 'tis like a tacit compact among men, by which the little ſubmit without repining to the great.

SELF-EXALTATION, like a bad politician, who betrays his iniquitous views, will inevitably rouſe the malignity of our inferiors to a confederacy, in order to depreciate thoſe qualities by which we arrogate pre-eminence: like ſmall ſtates, which are always ready to unite in oppoſition to a greater, whoſe ambition is juſtly ſuſpected.

THE power of wit and beauty is uſually derived from good-nature and ſweetneſs of

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diſpoſition, as the ſtrength of a realm depends moſtly on a mild and humane government.

THE duration of the power of wit and beauty is terminated by pride, as the longevity of empires is obſtructed by tyranny.

PERSONAL comelineſs is of itſelf a ſufficient recommendation. Such airs and geſtures as indicate how much it elates us, are like a bad comment upon a good text.

WIT will never loſe the prerogative of admiration, while content to range in queſt of it abroad: but when, not ſatisfied with ſo ample an harveſt, it grows enamoured with the forbidden fruit of home-conceit and ſelf-applauſe, it forfeits all claim to any other.

FROM what has been premiſed, it reſults, that proſperity was deſigned as a general bounty, conſigned to the management of the few, for the benefit of the many.

It never was intended as a ſolitary poſſeſſion, to be enjoyed excluſively without aſſociates: on the contrary, it ſhould be conſidered as a banquet, the enjoyment of which is enhanced by the number of partakers.

The miſery of others cannot be viewed, in any light, as an object of indifference. If it does not immediately affect our intereſt, it invades our chearfulneſs and tranquility, by the reflection, that what is another's caſe may become our own.

But the miſeries and misfortunes of others concern us more than the generality ſeem to imagine. There is an indiſſoluble connection ſubſiſting between all members of the community: the chain may, to the ſhort-ſighted and narrow-minded, be ſometimes imperceptible; but men of penetration know, that calamity, like an inundation, would in a ſhort time overwhelm all, unleſs effectually obviated by

by aſſiſting the ſufferers, through thoſe means that compaſſion, experience, and good policy, will jointly ſuggeſt to men of equal feeling and prudence.

HENCE the numerous channels through which the generoſity of the good and wiſe flows to the wants of the unhappy and the neceſſitous.

IN this light, which is that of ſenſe and truth, miſery becomes an object of equal ſympathy and terror. 'Tis like a fire broken out in the neighbourhood; in the extinction of which it behoves you to be aiding, leſt your own houſe ſhould be involved in the conflagration:

OR, like an invader of the territories of your allies, whom you are bound to ſuccour, leſt their deſtruction ſhould pave a way to your own.

POLICY ſhould make us earneſt to convince others, that we are not indifferent to their welfare; and probity ſhould lead us to be ſincere in our profeſſions. The alliance of policy and probity is the golden rule of reaſon.

A JUST and elevated mind thinks no acquiſition of ſuch importance as the regard and favourable opinion of the public, obtained through deeds of benevolence and humanity. As it is the ultimate ſcope of ſuch a man's deſires, it affords him a perpetual feaſt; and ſooths his ſoul in the ſame manner as the poſſeſſion of an eſtate which we have raiſed by our own induſtry and application.

THERE is an inward ſatisfaction and triumph in the conſciouſneſs of being eſteemed and beloved, that flatters the more, as it is a confirmation of the good opinion we ſo willingly entertain of our own merit.

THE

THE right of thinking highly of our deſerts, never ſeems to be clear and authentic without the ſeal of public approbation. 'Tis like a claim at law; which, whatever juſtice it may carry in our private apprehenſions, yet never aſſumes, while undecided, that fullneſs of ſtrength and validity which only a judicial determination has the power to confer.

GOOD-NATURE and Benevolence are the baſis of all the virtues; ſince they are not only the firſt promoters of juſtice and equity, but alſo the ſource of all public and private munificence.

GOOD-NATURE is a complacency in the pleaſure and happineſs, and a feeling for the pains and diſtreſſes of others, which prompt us to ſtep, as it were, out of ourſelves, in order to become their ſeconds in the field of humanity, either by countenancing their felicity with our joy, or alleviating their misfortune by our aſſiſtance.

BENEVOLENCE is that expanſion of the ſoul which enlarges all our views. We no longer look upon ourſelves as the ſecluſive members of any ſeparate ſociety: the difference of climate and nation vaniſhes, to make room for perſonal worth alone.

BENEVOLENCE may be likened to that generous ſcheme of univerſal union projected by Henry IV. of France. It admits all men indiſcriminately to the participation of thoſe honours and rewards that are due to virtue; and is perſuaded that the general rights of Nature afford an ampler title to them than the partial laws of particular nations.

A PLACID benevolent diſpoſition is the grand conſervator of the peace of ſociety: it operates in the common tenour of our conduct towards all, the ſame that love or friendſhip effect in our private attachments: our curioſity to diſcover the failings and imperfections of others, is loſt in the enjoyment of their good qualities.

THE

THE mind of a benevolent man is like a well-adminiſtered kingdom; where Impartiality ſits on the throne, dealing out an equitable meaſure of favours to all perſons, according to their reſpective proportion of merit; willing to give audience to every recommendation that bears the ſtamp of ſome virtue or accompliſhment, and ſhewing averſion and contempt for nothing but vice and folly.

LET-

LETTER III.

ON VERACITY.

NOTHING will ſooner procure you reſpect, than a ſtrict attachment to truth, and a contempt of falſehood.

As honeſty in our actions is the ſafeſt road to proſperity, ſo is a conſtant adherence to truth in our words the ſureſt way to general eſteem.

THERE is a certain blackneſs in falſehood diſguſting even to him that employs it. The reaſon is, that truth only being congenial to our nature, it ſuffers with difficulty a ſtranger that will infallibly ſoon or late deſtroy our character.

WE admit the help of falſehood, as we ſometimes have recourſe to thoſe we deſpiſe, and with whom we ſhould be aſhamed to acknowledge any correſpondence.

LIKE

LIKE venom whoſe infuſion corrupts the whole maſs of our blood, falſehood contaminates all our excellencies: their conſpicuity ſerves only to increaſe ſuſpicion and miſtruſt.

TRUTH is ſpoken with facility of expreſſion; but even the power of an iniquitous habit will not always give order and preciſion of words to falſehood.

THE former is like a natural river flowing gently from its ſource; but the latter is like an artificial conveyance of waters through places where Nature is evidently forced.

As healthy looks denote a ſound body, ſo perſpicuity of ſpeech declares an ingenuous mind: by the ſame rule, falſehood is no leſs diſcernible by incongruity, than a diſtemper by the alteration of our features.

How-

HOWEVER ſplendid your abilities, value yourſelf chiefly upon candour and openneſs; they are the moſt welcome introductors every where.

THE former are, at leaſt, as much and as often dreaded as they are wanted; but the latter always inſpire ſerenity and confidence.

A FREE and candid diſpoſition paſſes current with all men; it is like a preſent of light weight and rich value, which the receiver may carry about him without trouble: but the ſuperior parts of others are frequently like a burden, which we bear through mere neceſſity.

THE bare apprehenſion that we are cunning and artful, is often an inſuperable obſtruction to the moſt plauſible ſchemes; while, on the contrary, the perſuaſion of our candour, like a ſolemn credential, removes heſitation and diffidence.

TRUTH

TRUTH carries an air of authority that enforces perſuaſion: there is a ſympathetic alliance and analogy between the body and the ſoul, that breathes out in our exterior viſible deportment, and imperceptibly wins aſſent.

THE manner of our ſpeaking, our voice, our aſpect, equally contribute to aſcertain whether we ſpeak from conviction or from other motives.

PEOPLE ſeldom fail to diſtinguiſh by theſe between the ſimplicity and unaffectation of plain unſtudied truth, and that preparation of ſubtlety and craft which accompanies a concerted impoſture.

TRUTH, in this reſpect, is like the legal pretenſions of a lawful prince, which are manifeſted with more facility and clearneſs, and more readily underſtood, than the fallacious arguments of pretenders and uſurpers.

FALSEHOOD,

FALSEHOOD, on the other hand, is like a cracked veſſel: we are ſenſible of the defect, though we cannot diſcover exactly where it lies.

THE dignity of truth, like the charms of real beauty, needs no varniſh to heighten its luſtre: the purer it is ſeen, the ſooner it gains its end; which is belief to our aſſertions, confidence in our promiſes, and reliance on our perſons.

FALSEHOOD requires an intirely oppoſite method: it borrows all ſhapes and appearances to hide its deformity, as a woman of ill fame has recourſe to dreſs and artificial ornaments, to ſupply the wants of her loſt or faded attractions.

TRUTH is the ſole origin of conſiſtency in diſcourſe, as a king is the only fountain of honour in his dominions.

CON-

CONSISTENCY is the ſuperlative degree of merit in converſation; like the royal image on coin, it ſtamps weight and value upon all we ſay.

To be conſiſtent, is to unite ſenſe and truth inſeparably together: this only will procure us deference and conſideration. Wit and pleaſantry are but in the ſecond rank: wit may be admired, and pleaſantry may amuſe; but the ſatisfaction reſulting from them is only tranſitory; they may facilitate our admittance into company, but they never were known to produce affection or eſteem. Theſe are an aſſeſſment upon the heart, which only the qualities of the heart are entitled to levy; but wit and pleaſantry are too commonly the offspring of a fertile head and a barren ſoul.

TRUTH is the health, and falſehood the ſickneſs of reaſon.

TRUTH

TRUTH is the parent of courage to the mind, as health is of ſtrength to the body: the firſt adds fortitude to our thoughts, as the other does vigour to our motions.

TRUTH gives firmneſs to our behaviour. Like a man who knows he has got friends to ſupport him, our expreſſions are bold, and our appearance reſolute; while the conſciouſneſs of falſehood influences like a flaw in a deed that invalidates the whole: it unmans us, and often baffles the moſt conſtitutional intrepidity, by that embarraſſment which attends the fear of detection.

DISSIMULATION may ſometimes be unhappily neceſſary, but never can be claſſed with the virtues. Great minds may occaſionally condeſcend to uſe it; but they always pay a price far above its worth, in the violence they are forced to put upon their inclinations.

WHEN we reflect how much of our dignity and eſtimation muſt be laid down when

when we take up diſſimulation, well may we diſmiſs it as a mercenary who over-rates his hire.

Dissimulation often originates from the untimely want of prudence and diſcretion, yet audaciouſly lays claim to thoſe titles.

When improvidence and precipitation have hurried us into difficulties from which we are impatient to be delivered at any rate, in order to palliate the mean ſhifts and artifices we are driven to, we, uſurpingly, qualify them with the name of circumſpection, ſagacity, or any other that may repreſent our conduct in an honourable light.

This is no more than a baſe imitation of ambitious potentates, who colour their unjuſt enterprizes with falſe manifeſtoes and ſophiſtical reaſonings.

But prudence does not ſo much conſiſt in extricating us from diſagreeable emer-

gencies, as in preventing them. It diſclaims connection with artfulneſs and duplicity, as much as men of rank and quality ſhun the company and intercourſe of the vulgar.

PRUDENCE is the cloſe attendant of probity: this attachment is founded on the conviction of its indiſpenſible neceſſity throughout the viciſſitudes of life; and that, however all other helps and ſupports may fail us, yet we can never be totally undone while this ſingle prop remains. Experience teaches, that, alone, it is able to retrieve us from the worſt of ſituations; and may juſtly be compared to a faſt friend, that never forſakes thoſe who are true to him.

PROBITY is the parent of veracity, which is a conſcientious alliance between our thoughts and words, that never permits the latter to betray the former.

VERACITY is the only root of all ſafe and ſalutary meaſures in private life, as

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an upright adminiſtration is the only laſting ſupport of a ſtate.

When a man has acquired a reputation of veracity, he ſecures an aſcendency over the minds of others, which no conſideration of genius, rank, or opulence, can confer. The homage we pay to wealth and ſtation is intereſted, and merely external, and that we owe to capacity is ſeldom unaccompanied with envy: but truth eſtabliſhes its claims in our hearts; we feel no compulſion in that internal reverence which it commands; we freely beſtow it, like an equitable tax which a beloved ſovereign receives from the loyalty and benevolence of his people.

Such a man is always ſure to find attention, however he may be defective in elegance of perſon or appearance, or wanting in eloquence: the ſenſe and integrity of his words and meaning preponderate with the wiſe, above all other conſiderations; while the moſt poliſhed method of

addreſs is void of influence, where fidelity to truth is queſtionable.

SINCERITY, in this caſe, is like a poor but loyal ſubject, whoſe homely treatment is more welcome to his prince, than the pompous entertainment of a ſuſpected courtier.

THERE cannot be a clearer teſtimony of the purity of our hearts, than a fixed habit of ſpeaking truth.

LIKE the houſe of Poplicola, which lay open to the inſpection of every Roman, it ſhews, that nothing ſhameful is tranſacted there.

WHILE integrity is at the bottom of our deſigns, 'tis like a known eaſy language, that has no obſcurities to decypher, and is written in fair and legible characters: we read our duty in it without difficulty, and are ſeldom liable to the commiſſion of errors.

LETTER IV.

ON

GENEROSITY.

A SHORT acquaintance with the world will convince you, that generoſity is the nobleſt title in human ſociety. Whatever accompliſhments a man poſſeſſes, if he is not generouſly inclined, he is beneath him, who, having that ſingle qualification, has no other.

A GENEROUS diſpoſition outweighs every other virtue among men; as, in the day of battle, courage alone is worth more than all other endowments without it.

GENEROSITY is a peculiar elevation of ſentiments, that will not ſuffer us to be ſatisfied with our own private proſperity.

IT produces a kindneſs and benignity of conſideration that regulate, harmonize, and ſoften every motion of the heart, and reſtrain the impulſe of every paſſion that might detriment or offend.

A GENEROUS man deems calumny and detraction no leſs diſgraceful to the auditor than to the ſpeaker; as, like obſcenity, ſuch topics are ſeldom introduced, unleſs a willingneſs is perceived to grant them reception and encouragement. He is not only ſcrupulous in his own treatment of the abſent, but is zealous in preventing defamation, from a juſt perſuaſion, that ſilence in thoſe caſes would render him guilty of participation; in the ſame manner as a man becomes anſwerable for the miſchiefs flowing from an unjuſt ſentence, through the refuſal of his teſtimony in a good cauſe.

INDULGENCE to ſlander ſteals upon us unawares. Our natural ambition to riſe above others induces us, inſenſibly, to

liſten to what degrades them from the rank they held in our eſtimation. Though we diſapprove of malevolence in general, we have hardly honeſty enough to diſcountenance it, when it pays a tribute to our vanity by leſſening the worth of others.

CONSCIOUSLY to let unmerited aſperſion prevail, is a tacit approbation of it, only the meaner for being indirect; it is availing one's ſelf of another's villainy, when we dare not employ our own.

A PERSON of a generous diſpoſition extenuates venial offences, and abets no ſtigmatiſation, unleſs the intereſt of the community demand vice and infamy to be brought forth to public notice and chaſtiſement.

HE delights in making as few examples as poſſible; like a humane commander, who ſpares the lives of his ſoldiers, and never commits them to the chances of war without abſolute neceſſity.

He is ſlow to accuſation and puniſhment, and, like a humane legiſlator, unwilling to be ſevere without the weightieſt cauſe, in the execution of juſtice he remembers mercy.

He inflicts correction with grief, and, like a diſpaſſionate judge, hearkens not to wrath, but to the law.

A generous man takes no advantages, ſhould he have the upper-hand of an opponent, whether in concerns of great or little importance: he is modeſt in ſucceſs, and expreſſes no indecent exultation; he behaves like a merciful conqueror, who uſes his victory with moderation, and gives no looſe to rage and reſentment.

Liberality of ſpirit adds to the luſtre of every virtue, and is a ſecurity to their ſplendour by ſilencing the voice of envy.

We may ſafely bid defiance to the malice of open or concealed enemies, while we are

are protected by a character of beneficence. It fruſtrates the efforts of jealouſy, and forces it to ſuppreſs the appearance of antipathy.

We become in this inſtance like a ſtate, whoſe reputation for public integrity, by ſecuring the ready aſſiſtance of its allies, obliges its enemies to remain quiet.

As, while unable to hurt the object of their hatred, men ſtifle thoſe emotions that betray ſpite and rancour, our adverſaries can only repine at us in ſecret; like courtiers, who dare not openly attack one who enjoys the favour of his ſovereign.

All the qualities we derive from birth and nature, and all the accompliſhments we acquire through art and ſtudy, receive their laſt poliſh from that grandeur and ſublimity of ſentiments that characteriſe a liberal mind.

GENEROSITY is to the other virtues what a diadem is to the royal apparel; it completes the dignity of our character, and ennobles our thoughts and actions.

GENEROSITY is the patriotism of mankind.

IT ſets us above intereſtedneſs and narrow conſiderations: we chearfully contribute to the benefit of others, and diſdain to over-reach them, or profit by their unſkilfulneſs or inadvertency. In this light, generoſity may be conſidered as the pride of virtue.

IN the ſocial enjoyments of life, we are equally ready to exert our own endeavours, and to accept of all attempts to pleaſe. Our aim is not to ſhine alone, but alſo to render others entertaining, by calling forth their latent parts, and encouraging the diffident to put on a becoming aſſurance.

LIKE

LIKE a man who ſcorns to be treated at free coſt, a liberal mind cautiouſly avoids the introduction of whatever can only divert at another's expence.

GENEROSITY reſembles an act of univerſal toleration; it annihilates that ſelfiſh propenſity to domineer, ſo inherent in our make; and which, like the fury of religious perſecution, ſubjects all thoſe to ridicule whoſe ſingularities differ from our own.

As few men are totally exempt from riſible peculiarities, as well as more ſerious failings, the capital foe to ſociety is a ſatirical intolerance, which, like an inexorable officer of the police, ſhews leaſt mercy where moſt is wanted.

INTOLERANCE is a mixture of haughtineſs and cruelty; we under-value others to over-rate ourſelves; and we triumph in their uneaſineſs, like inhuman victors who

who inſult over the diſtreſſes of the conquered.

WHEN ſuch methods of entertaining company, inſtead of meeting with deteſtation as nutriments to malice, are encouraged as incentives to pleaſure; 'tis like a conſpiracy againſt human nature, in order to make the worſt we can of our condition.

THERE is not a more intolerable fault than unwillingneſs to bear with thoſe of others: it is, in fact, no leſs than a general declaration of war againſt all mankind.

GENEROSITY, like an impartial mediator, reconciles theſe jarrings and differences of temper and ideas; it ſuſpends our native proneneſs to hoſtilities againſt each other, from conviction that the moſt accompliſhed perſon has his foibles, as the beſt governed country its weak ſides.

A LIBERAL temper is often the beſt protection againſt ourſelves, and the ſureſt

ſureſt preſervative againſt actions of which repentance is ever the conſequence, in honeſt minds.

In thoſe unguarded moments when the torrent of wrath or petulance hurries men beyond their own purpoſes, and betrays them, as it were, into our hands, generoſity ſteps in to their aſſiſtance, and ſhelters them from our anger and reſentment.

Instead of availing ourſelves of a ſituation that ſelfiſhneſs would rejoice at, when reaſon lies in a manner proſtrate, and the eye of vigilance is ſhut, our conſideration is turned not to the advantages before us, but ſolely to the merits and juſtice of our cauſe.

This is the moſt illuſtrious of all victories, becauſe the moſt difficult to obtain, that over our intereſt and paſſions.

As

As generoſity is the ſource of diſintereſtedneſs, it is no leſs the tomb of unlawful ambition.

LIKE a pacific monarch, whoſe equitable views are above improving to ſiniſter purpoſes the broils and troubles ſubſiſting among his neighbours, we reject all temptations to profit through the diſſentions ariſing among individuals; and, inſtead of fomenting enmity, are ſtudious to re-unite the diſaffected.

LIBERALITY of mind is a ſchool wherein thoſe leſſons of divinity are taught, from which no ſect ever diſſented.

THE dictates of this ſchool are truly orthodox and celeſtial: by liſtening to them human nature is ſublimed, as metals through fire are diſencumbered of their droſs, and attain their higheſt degree of purity.

This ſchool is like a council of war compoſed of heroes and conquerors, who are above deviſing common atchievements: it infuſes none but the moſt exalted ſentiments.

We are no longer ſwayed only by thoſe maxims that barely regulate ſociety, and ſettle the rights and duties of human intercourſe: theſe we leave to the herd of mankind, who obey them through neceſſity, and are governed by motives of fear. But we look to higher inſtitutions: we act from principles of univerſal beneficence, and think ourſelves as reſponſible for not ſeeking and improving every opportunity conducive to the welfare and happineſs of others, as the former deem themſelves culpable for committing any deed poſitively detrimental to ſociety.

Like the pious and diligent almoner of a charitable aſſociation, generoſity deſcends into the particulars and caſualties of

of domeſtic life, and rejoices at the diſcovery of diſtreſs which it is able to relieve.

Our munificence is only limited by our abilities, and we aſpire at an increaſe of theſe but to extend the former; as a patriot adminiſtration aims at an augmentation of power, only for the ſake of more effectually ſerving the ſtate.

To ſum up the whole, generoſity diveſts us radically of ſelfiſhneſs in our own caſe, and of partiality in that of others. Like the repreſentation of Juſtice, we become blind to private views, and totally ſubmit ourſelves to the guidance of that public ſpirit which illuminates the underſtanding of all thoſe who ſeek it with earneſtneſs, and adhere to it with fidelity.

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LETTER V.

ON THE

SENSE OF EQUITY, AND THE LIGHT OF CONSCIENCE.

YOU will find in your inward feelings, if duly attended to, a fund of rules for your conduct, that will never lead you aſtray.

THE world is an immenſe community; for the welfare of which, its numberleſs conſtituents are, by a tacit compact, univerſally united to each other.

HUMAN ſociety may be likened to a copartnerſhip in trade; every member of which is intitled to an intereſt adequate to the capital which he puts into the common ſtock.

OWNERS of ample poſſeſſions are the truſtees of Providence; which allows them great commiſſions, on account of the greatneſs of the work they have to perform.

THE diſpenſation of human proſperity is lodged in their hands, as that of public money in thoſe of a treaſurer: they are bound to obviate by their interpoſition the complaint of an unequal repartition of things, as he is by his ſtation obliged to make good every legal demand upon the ſtate.

THE felicity deſigned for human nature reſembles the light proceeding from celeſtial bodies; which is not confined to any ſphere in particular, but irradiates the whole creation.

WHENEVER men by their conduct aim at a larger impropriation than is their due, 'tis like infringing a decree of government made for the uſe and benefit of the whole.

In order to direct our judgement in this neceſſary ſettlement of the reciprocal claims of ſociety, Nature has given us the ſenſe of equity; which, like an exact and faithful accountant, aſſigns to every one his proper ſhare.

A mind fraught with equity is like a central pillar, on which the edifice of Hope and Confidence can reſt with ſecurity.

Like a truſty keeper of public ſtores, it embezzles none for private emolument; and as an upright miniſter in the diſtribution of places and employments, it is above illicit partialities and ſelfiſh reſervations.

However inviolable our attachment may prove to the maxims of honour and honeſty in the civil tranſactions of life, we are often apt to pay no attention to thoſe nicer precepts of reciprocal duty, in the obſervance of which, nevertheleſs, the delicacy and perfection of equity conſiſt.

How common is it to arrogate undue merit to ourſelves! how reluctantly do we acknowledge the deſerts of others! and how ready are we to diminiſh, or even, if we can, to annihilate them in thoſe from whom we apprehend a competition!

PRIDE, ſelf-love, and puſillanimity, are the three demons that inſtigate us on ſuch occaſions. Liſted under the banner of ignorance, their primitive parent, they enter into a blind combination to obſtruct the courſe of reciprocal equity, in the appreciation of each individual's worth.

PRIDE is intirely immerſed in its own importance, and, like a monarch ſurrounded by flatterers, neither knows itſelf nor others.

SELF-LOVE benumbs and deadens all ſenſation for others. While we fancy ourſelves ſecure, we ſet their welfare at a diſtance from our thoughts; as the owners of a cargo who have inſured their property,

ty, are indifferent about the fate of the veſſel.

PUSILLANIMITY confines and depreſſes our heart, and hangs like an unwieldy weight on all its motions.

LIKE a cowardly aſſociate who abandons his companion in the hour of danger, we have not ſoul enough to concur in doing juſtice to thoſe who claim it from us.

PRIDE, ſelf-love, and puſillanimity, are the ſworn foes to candour and openneſs in ſocial intercourſe, by baniſhing condeſcenſion, benignity, and confidence.

PRIDE is that exceſs of complaiſance to ourſelves, which excludes all notice of others.

SELF-LOVE is that warmth of attachment to our concerns, which like a fire deſtroys all other conſiderations.

PUSILLANIMITY, the retainer and delegate of ſelf-love, is that intereſted apprehenſion of our own weakneſs, which overrates the ſtrength of others, and aims to deprive them of every advantage, in order to reduce them beneath our level.

IGNORANCE is their common parent. Were we thoroughly ſenſible of the ridicule attending ſelf-exaltation, of the neceſſity of univerſal benevolence, and of the meanneſs of depreciating others, we ſhould neither be proud, ſelfiſh, nor puſillanimous.

THE cure of this pernicious ignorance is, often to dwell upon the recollection, how circumſcribed the faculties of the brighteſt individual muſt naturally be, and how loſt and forlorn we find ourſelves, when left alone to our ſingle powers; how odious we render ourſelves by avidity and rapaciouſneſs; and how contemptible, by undervaluing others, and refuſing them their due.

THIS

THIS conſideration will prepare our minds and hearts for the reception and exerciſe of that ſenſe of juſtice, which, like a charter of neceſſary knowledge, is freely beſtowed on all who are willing to receive it.

EQUITY is that unerring balance wherein conſcience weighs the worth and demerit, the righteous claims and wrong pretenſions of all; and where ſelf is thrown into the common ſcale, without predilection.

As by an incroaching diſpoſition in thoſe who are at the helm of ſtates, nations are ſet at variance; in the ſame manner private life is diſturbed, and rendered unhappy, by the ſelfiſh temper of individuals who preſide in families and domeſtic ſocieties.

THE ground-work of equity muſt be laid in the dawn of reaſon. We muſt be-

gin betimes to repreſs the inordinate flights of an ambitious imagination.

THOUGH we make it a duty to condemn ambition in general, nothing is more uſual than to infect inexperienced youth with improper ideas of grandeur and glory, by ſetting before them as examples worthy of imitation, preciſely thoſe which ought moſt carefully to be avoided.

THEIR ideas of equity are quickly perverted or obſcured, when they are witneſſes of the admiration and praiſe that are ſo laviſhly paid to the memory of men, whoſe actions, though wonderful, are not reconcileable to juſtice.

HAD more care been taken to teach leſſons of moderation to Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, during his infancy, it is probable his reign would have been attended with fewer calamities.

To become great and famous, is the firſt principle inculcated; and a noble one it is, if rightly underſtood. To be great, is to be wiſe, learned, ſagacious, brave, juſt, and generous. All theſe lead naturally to fame, as the proper reward of greatneſs; which, according to the foregoing explanation, is in fact nothing more than goodneſs.

But as we delight in pompous titles and appellations, Vanity, to pleaſe us, has annexed the name of great to what is good, in order to ſtimulate our ambition to perform with warmth and zeal, what, otherwiſe, the dictates of reaſon and duty would not influence us to do with equal fervour.

Hence, as there are many things which, though far from being good, yet retain the appearance of greatneſs, we are often hurried away by falſe notions of grandeur, and loſe ſight of thoſe objects which alone

alone are truly great. Like a pilot who has miſtaken the right land-mark, we ſtray from the proper eſtimation of things, and are loſt in the purſuit of courſes equally ruinous and criminal.

NATURE, however, has provided a diligent monitor to recal us from this erroneous track. This monitor is Conſcience. We are often offended at the ſeverity of its reproofs; but, like a faithful friend reſolutely bent on reforming us, it ſtands the brunt of all our capricious humours.

CONSCIENCE, like a royal ſtandard hoiſted aloft in public ſight, is conſpicuouſly uppermoſt in all our thoughts.

IT is in ſome meaſure the ſhadow of the ſoul; as it regularly keeps pace with all its motions, and neither magnifies nor leſſens their proportional worth or demerit.

CON-

CONSCIENCE is the interpreter of the laws of Nature, and acts by deputation from Heaven, as a king's vicegerent by the royal commiſſion.

LIKE a ſkilful counſellor at the bar, it aſſiſts with immediate advice in the moſt difficult caſes; and as an expert judge, decides expeditiouſly and convincingly upon our deſigns.

COMPLIANCE with the dictates of conſcience is like a ſoldier's obedience to his general: we have no chaſtiſement to apprehend.

CONSCIENCE, like the rays of the ſun, both warms and enlightens: it ſhews our duty, and inſpires with courage to perform it.

A CONSCIENTIOUS diſcharge of our obligations, is to the ſoul what a ſhield is to the body: as this preſerves from wounds,

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ſo does the other from the pangs of remorſe.

THE docility and adherence to the admonitions of this internal tribunal, is ſometimes like the obſervance of thoſe rules that have been diſcovered by mathematical reſearches: though ignorant of their theory, we know them to be right in practice.

THE light of Conſcience pierces through every paſſion and prejudice: if infallibility is ſeparable from the Divine Eſſence, this original inſtinct of our nature is certainly its brighteſt and pureſt emanation.

IN the mean time, let an exact and rigid ſenſe of integrity be the ruling principle of your conduct. Let the motives of your actions be diveſted of fear and ſervility. To be honeſt merely from the dread of puniſhment, argues a meanneſs of diſpoſition which excludes all pretences to merit.

'Tis

'Tis like living in ſubjection to our lawful ſovereign, becauſe we dare not revolt.

THIS frame of mind is neceſſary to conſtitute a man of real probity. Nothing is ſtrictly juſt and laudable, but through the cauſes that influence our determinations.

THIS zeal and reverence for equity, founded ſolely on its excellence and dignity, and unſullied with ſordid views of ſecurity and intereſt, may be compared to a ſentimental attachment to the perſon we profeſs to love, purified from the dregs of worldly conſiderations, and devoting us to the object of our paſſion wholly for its ſake.

As only true love can affect the heart, only true honour can ennoble the mind. As the one produces tenderneſs and ſympathy, ſo does the other elevation and nobleneſs of ſentiments. The firſt harmoniſes our thoughts, and poliſhes our behaviour; the ſecond exalts our views, and ſtamps

ſtamps the mark of greatneſs upon our actions.

As love cultivates the ſoft and ſocial, and as honour promotes the ſublime virtues; neither the mind nor the heart can attain to any eminent degree of refinement, without the aſſiſtance of both in their genuine purity.

HAPPY the man, whoſe diſpoſition to equity flows much leſs from the knowledge of his duties, than a moral affection for virtue, imbibed from a happy education; as love is often inſtilled through acquaintance in infancy.

UNLESS we are actuated by warmth and inclination to eſpouſe the cauſe of juſtice, we ſoon deviate from it, if no emoluments attend our perſeverance; as we relinquiſh a woman whom we courted for her wealth, when that charm ſubſiſts no longer.

THE

THE time of probation for ſubſtantial unfeigned probity, is when the bars of diſcovery and chaſtiſement are removed from our apprehenſions, or when vice offers more tempting rewards than virtue: in the ſame manner as the true ſeaſon to prove our loyalty to our prince, is when ſedition attempts to fetter his due authority, and when it is become ſafer to ſide with rebellion than with legal obedience.

EQUITY ſhould reſide in our heart, and not in our fears. Unleſs it poſſeſſes that capital ſeat of the human ſyſtem, its power is but weakly founded; as a ſovereign cannot completely aſſume that name while his metropolis refuſes to recognize him.

ASSIDUITY in the conſideration and ſtudy of equity, produces the ſame effect on the mind, as beauty does on the eye; we are equally ſtruck with admiration, reſpect and love.

WHEN

WHEN this happy veneration for rectitude has taken poſſeſſion of the ſoul, it reſembles a ſtrong citadel, which the violence of rebellious paſſions may often aſſault and preſs very cloſe, but can never totally reduce.

AS integrity is in a great meaſure its own reward, ſo is diſhoneſty not leſs its own puniſhment. If vengeance ſhould not riſe from any other quarter, like the ſcorpion, it will do execution on itſelf.

CONSCIENCE never grows ſo callous, but we are moved at the recollection of the injuſtice we have done to others.

SELDOM can the moſt obdurate refrain from feeling for the misfortunes of others: but when to this the conſciouſneſs is added of being acceſſory to their woe, it cannot fail proportionally to increaſe the painful ſenſation which Nature is liable to experience at the ſight of diſtreſs.

BUT

BUT were we ſo baſely corrupt and dead to ſenſibility, as to center all in ſelf, even there we ſhall not be ſafe: we ſhall be haunted by thoſe daily proofs, that teach how unavailing the artifices of villany uſually prove againſt the detection of guilt; and how often, in deſpite of darkneſs and ſecrecy, it falls out even by the ordinary concurrence of events, that delinquents betray themſelves by thoſe very meaſures which they had planned for their ſecurity.

A MAN'S worth or demerits always emerge at laſt: the moſt plauſible appearances do not prevent the native alertneſs of our curioſity from prying into each other's real character.

BUT ſhould we ſucceed in the concealment of our infamy from the public, we cannot fly from that diſquietude which neceſſarily follows thoſe actions, a diſcovery of which muſt give a mortal wound to our reputation.

THIS diſquietude acts the part of a ſevere acquaintance, who knows of our guilt, and is perpetually threatening to divulge it.

WHEN the power of civil juſtice fails, Nature erects a tribunal in our own imagination, that immenſe fund of rewards and puniſhments; whence, as from an inexhauſtible treaſury, ſupplies are everlaſtingly drawn to protect the good, and proſecute the bad.

AS imagination is a zealous friend to innocence, it is no leſs an inexorable foe to guilt; and, like an unpitying executioner, purpoſedly holds the axe in our ſight.

THOUGH out of the reach of open condemnation, we ſtill are doomed to be the victims of private remorſe, and to act the moſt excruciating of all parts, that of ſelf-tormentors.

As the manifeſtation of our villany is an event we look for inceſſantly, we are in the ſituation of a criminal that is ill concealed, and hears the gradual approach of his purſuers.

In the mean while, we loſe our reliſh for the comforts of life; and the moſt pleaſurable ties of ſocial intercourſe become inſipid.

We grow ſtrangers to confidence in others, from the conſciouſneſs we deſerve none ourſelves. We ſuſpect profeſſions of eſteem and affection, from the conviction that we are not intitled to any: our very reſt is not ſecure; for even dreams infeſt us there, and anticipate the blackneſs of our waking proſpects: we are like a malefactor on the eve of execution, who ſuffers in his mind all thoſe tortures which are to be inflicted on his body.

The forſaking of probity for intereſt is like abandoning a beautiful and chaſte

wife, in preference to a proſtitute. The former, devoted to us from the pureſt motives, remains the invariable partner of our evil as well as of our proſperous days; and by her lovelineſs and ſincerity, can give charms to misfortune and care. But the attachment of the latter is only pretended and tranſitory: the day of adverſity puts a period to it; and ſhe proves her baſeneſs, by leaving us the moment we begin to want her.

THUS while our life is upright, we command eſteem and reſpect. Whatever our circumſtances may be, ſtill our name is mentioned with praiſe. The conſciouſneſs of rectitude beams a ray of comfort to the ſoul, in ſpite of all the ſtorms of calamity. But if we embrace contrary maxims, though, during the ſunſhine of precarious ſucceſs, Hypocriſy may wear the maſk of attachment, ſhe throws it off as ſoon as the hour of tribulation is come, and reſigns us to thoſe horrors that await on diſtreſs aggravated by guilt and ſhame.

THERE is an imprudence in diſhoneſty which betrays a weak mind no leſs than a bad heart: it fully verifies the proverb, that "Honeſty is the beſt policy."

THE folly of departing from integrity in the tranſactions of private life, is not unlike that of a public traitor to his country. This latter, deluded by the phantoms of ambition or revenge, for the ſake of uncertainties, encounters almoſt inevitable ruin. The former, enſlaved by the proſpect of lucre, affronts impending danger; and ſets leſs value on the peace of his life, than on the chance of ſucceeding in attempts that may deſtroy his credit.

PUBLIC execration, or private wretchedneſs, no man eſcapes, who unwiſely throws aſide the conſideration of what is due to others, in order to act as if he owed no regard but to himſelf; and who, for the uncertain gratification of unlawful views, madly conſents to incur the riſk of loſing the title of an honeſt man.

THIS loſs is the greateſt that can befal a member of ſociety: no gain or advantage of any denomination is ever able to repair it: it is like the ſevering of a limb from the body, which is thereby disfigured ever after.

WHEN the numerous motives are reviewed, that ſhould induce men to remain inviolably faithful to the rules of integrity, nothing but abſolute infatuation ſeems to be ſufficient to alter their conduct. Evident ruin threatens them on every ſide, the inſtant they quit that only ſure ground of ſecurity. 'Tis like an uſkilful general, who, by raſhly abandoning an advantageous poſt, delivers himſelf into the hands of his enemies.

To conclude: Whatever difficulties may ſurround you, whatever temptations may aſſail, reſt aſſured, that improbity will increaſe the firſt; and that the laſt will vaniſh like an illuſion before the eye of reaſon.

WHEN

When Selfiſhneſs diſplays its promiſſory views, turn from them as from the head of Meduſa, the fabulous power of which is realized in thoſe who look too ſtedfaſtly on their allurements. Honour dies within us, and our ſouls are petrified to all noble ſenſations.

Should the attractions of Pleaſure invite you to ſtray from the dictates of conſcience, remember they are ſyrens that only intice to deſtroy. Faſten yourſelf immoveably to that ſole pillar of ſafety,—the ſenſe of your duty; as Ulyſſes is ſaid to have chained himſelf to the maſt of his veſſel, to prevent his yielding to their ſnares.

LETTER VI.

ON

GRATITUDE.

REFLECTION and experience will teach you that gratitude is a qualification without which we are unfit for, and unworthy of, ſociety.

IT includes the two fundamental virtues of juſtice and benevolence; and is the moſt authentic ratification of a perſon's deſerving the benefits he has received.

WANT of gratitude has long been proverbially deemed the higheſt reproach to human nature.

WHEN we fly from the face of our benefactor, it can only proceed from a narrow diſpoſition; for he that feels the richneſs of his good will, rejoices to find occaſions to

to manifeſt it, as a man of true valour is glad of an opportunity to ſignalize himſelf.

'Tis impolicy to ſhun the perſon whoſe friendſhip we have experienced; he will either ſuſpect you of ingratitude, or, which is worſe, of treachery and deceit.

There is, beſides, an injuſtice unworthy of a manly ſoul in avoiding the preſence of a benefactor: 'tis robbing his ſight of that object which muſt confer happineſs upon him, from the recollection of his generoſity.

A candid and chearful deportment with thoſe by whom we have been obliged, does honour to us and to them too: it ſhews that we are ſenſible of their kindneſs, and that we place confidence in them; which is the higheſt compliment a man can pay to another.

GRATITUDE, like all the other virtues, is in the mind. When the burden of benefits ſits heavy, 'tis plain they are not placed on a proper object: we only feel their weight from the conſciouſneſs of our reluctance to beſtow them.

WHOEVER has been obliged by many, inſtead of repining at his lot, ſhould rejoice that he has been found worthy of notice; ſince, generally ſpeaking, none but thoſe who deſerve ſome, ever meet with any.

HE that is not of a grateful turn, is loſt to half the enjoyments of life and ſociety.

WE ſo daily call for the helping hand of each other, that they who requite a piece of kindneſs merely from the rule and principle of decorum, deny themſelves one of the moſt agreeable ſenſations in nature,—the pleaſure of ſentimental attachment to their benefactor.

WHEN a man has eſtabliſhed a character of gratitude, he ſeldom fails to proſper. We are all ready to give, where we have reaſon to promiſe ourſelves a proper return; and Providence has kindly ordained, that even the greateſt may often ſtand in need of the leaſt.

THERE is alſo a well-founded prepoſſeſſion in favour of a grateful man. This virtue is of ſo amiable a texture, as never to go alone. Experience has repeatedly ſhewn, that a grateful perſon is uſually very deſerving in other reſpects.

A SINGULAR felicity attends the character of one whom many have concurred in obliging: it raiſes an emulation in men to outdo each other in their acts of kindneſs. Nothing is more common than to ſerve a man, upon hearing that others have intereſted themſelves in his favour.

GRATEFULNESS to our friends is a conſtant and efficacious diſcharge of our debts: 'tis a ſort of perpetual payment, that bears ample

ample intereſt in the continuation and addition of favours.

A GRATEFUL perſon not only encourages his benefactor's kindneſs, but invites the beneficence of others, by the proſpect of meeting with the ſame tribute of gratitude which he hath paid to the former.

As ingratitude is deemed a proof of the utmoſt depravity, its contrary naturally implies a moſt excellent diſpoſition. Of this the attractive power is ſuch, that, notwithſtanding we have often no reaſon to promiſe ourſelves any other emolument than the pleaſure of obliging; yet that alone is ſo cogent and perſuaſive, where an engaging turn of mind is found in the object of our beneficence, that we are ſatisfied with that alone, and ſeek no other recompence of our generoſity, than the contentment ariſing from its exertion.

LET us never hurry our gratitude; it loſes its merit by endeavouring to give too ſpeedy a ſatisfaction.

MEN

MEN naturally delight in ſeeing others obliged to them. Were it not that the neceſſity of things generally renders obligations reciprocal, they would rather enjoy the gratitude of the mind, than receive their actual payment by a requital of good offices.

So far is the expreſſion of gratefulneſs by a parity of ſervices from being a proof of it, that it often proceeds from a circumſcribed ſelfiſh temper, unable to bear the thoughts of another's having any intereſt in our bottom.

IT not unfrequently happens after this repayment, that men of hollow hearts, thinking themſelves diſengaged from further ties, have acted with as much unfriendlineſs to their benefactors, as if the mere replacing a deed of kindneſs with another, had diſſolved all further obligation.

THE apparent deſire of being grateful, is, doubtleſs, more acceptable to an elevated

ted mind, than the action by which we ſtudy to diſplay our gratitude. It is in general more uſual to hear perſons complain of the ingratitude of others, from their neglecting to ſhew their cordiality and remembrance of benefits received, than from having omitted to teſtify it by deeds.

GRATITUDE is the foundation of the moſt intimate and ſtricteſt friendſhips; owing to the diſcovery of that ſenſibility of ſoul which is the principal ornament of our nature, and the ſtrongeſt link of ſociety.

THERE are ſo many methods of ſhewing gratitude, that none ought to be ſolicitous on that account: it appears ſufficiently of itſelf; and, like love, if it exiſts, will immediately be ſeen.

THERE is a ſtrong affinity and reſemblance in both theſe paſſions: they are almoſt equally perceptible in our actions, and

and there is a ſtriking ſimilitude in their various effects.

GRATITUDE, like love, is more binding to a magnanimous temper, without the external aſſiſtance of ſerviceable proofs, than all theſe can be, if unaccompanied with that readineſs and fervour which peculiarize a grateful heart.

IF we recapitulate the moſt ſignal actions that adorn ancient or modern hiſtory, we ſhall not find a greater number effected by love than by gratitude.

ONE might juſtly define it a compoſition of generoſity, friendſhip, and love; as it is queſtionable which of theſe three motives is predominant.

GRATITUDE carries with it all the richneſs of generoſity, all the warmth of friendſhip, and all the attachment of love.

TRUE

TRUE gratitude excludes all intereſted conſiderations; and, inſtead of meaſuring its returns by the benefits received, only reflects on the intention of the donor.

LIKE charity, which interprets all things for the beſt, a man of gratitude is even willing to attribute ſervices rendered him, to better motives than thoſe which really prompted them; and is rather apt to reward the goodneſs of the effects, than to remember the badneſs of their cauſe.

LET-

LETTER VII.

ON

MAGNANIMITY.

BE fully perſuaded, that a great ſoul is founded on a good one. Magnanimity is a diadem that virtue only confers a title to wear.

We often hear men extolled for the greatneſs of their ſouls, who ought rather to be ſtigmatized for the violence of their paſſions.

Magnanimity is often attributed to pride, hatred, revenge, capriciouſneſs, and even to indolence.

How often do men refuſe, from miſgrounded notions of ſelf-dignity, to receive

benefits from thoſe to whom they ought in no wiſe to bluſh for being indebted.

How often do ſpite and rancour prompt us to ſcorn the acceptance of any ſervice from thoſe who have been the open avowed ſubjects of our enmity, and who ſtill remain the ſecret ones of our ill will!

How often does a vindictive temper hurry a man into dangers, which, but for the ſake of gratifying his private malice, he would moſt carefully avoid!

How often, from a whimſical diſpoſition of mind, unattentive or unable to diſcern its real intereſt, are fortunate occaſions overlooked or ſlighted, which want of penetration thinks proper to aſcribe to a noble ſpirit of diſintereſtedneſs!

How often, finally, does a torpid, inactive, liſtleſs habit of body or mind prevent us from engaging where various gratifications powerfully invite our endeavours!

vours! while unexperienced obſervers imagine, that a ſuperiority of ſoul ſets us above thoſe acquiſitions.

A MAN is never truly magnanimous, unleſs the paſſions and deſires he denies compliance to, have put his reaſon to the ſevereſt trial. Where appetite is not ſtrong, there is but little merit in curbing it.

MAGNANIMITY therefore is a full knowledge and a feeling ſenſe of that you abſtain from, with an earneſt propenſity to poſſeſs it, both ſubdued to the government of reaſon.

SOME actions, in appearance great, may be performed without any mixture of magnanimity in their motives; whilſt others, for want of that exterior ſplendor, derive no merit to their authors; like rivers whoſe original ſprings are unknown, from long running under ground.

MAGNANIMITY, like a monarch in diſguiſe, will ſometimes dwell among the loweſt conditions of mankind.

HOWEVER unimportant the opportunities of diſplaying it may ſeem, it loſes nothing of its genuine greatneſs; like an eminent perſonage, whoſe condeſcenſion to inferiors never diminiſhes the reſpect that is due to his rank.

HE that wants magnanimity, travels through life without its moſt neceſſary proviſion.

THERE are ſo many occaſions of exerting it, that we are perpetually at a loſs, even on the moſt trifling occurrences, without its aſſiſtance.

'TIS an error to think that magnanimity belongs only to great and extraordinary emergencies: it enters into the moſt minute tranſactions; and its preſence or abſence often decides of a man's character in

in ſuch inſtances as are ſeemingly unintereſting.

As magnanimity is that turn of mind which enables a man to withſtand the heavier oppreſſions of fortune, and to riſe ſuperior to great calamities; ſo in the more humble and ordinary ſcenes, it preſerves him from betraying a childiſh impatience at ſmaller diſappointments, and places him above the conſideration of trifles.

DANGERS and croſſes, vexations of mind and body, are the general map we muſt give a thorough and aſſiduous inſpection to, ere we pretend to ſet out on the journey of life with any reaſonable expectation of acquitting ourſelves ſucceſsfully.

To face theſe enemies, two companions muſt be ſelected of indiſpenſible neceſſity; the one is circumſpection, the other magnanimity. But as, with all the watchfulneſs and care our nature is capable of, we muſt not promiſe ourſelves exemption from trou-

bles and perplexities of various kinds, magnanimity is the champion to keep neareſt to us. When the other is foiled, this one ſtill remains unconquerable, and will retrieve us from thoſe difficulties which the dexterity of the other could not prevent.

THOUGH magnanimity generally proceeds from our native diſpoſition, yet it may be acquired, as well as other valuable qualifications. The ſeeds of all the virtues are in our heart, and either periſh through neglect, or improve by cultivation.

IMPETUOSITY and haſtineſs of temper are the capital foes to magnanimity; which never dwells ſeparate from coolneſs and deliberation.

A SEDATE and placid conſtitution of mind is the fitteſt ſoil for magnanimity to proſper in; as the culture of it depends on thought and judgement.

MAG-

MAGNANIMITY is a welcome, pleaſing title: it gratifies our natural propenſity to all that is ſhewy and ſplendid, much more than thoſe modeſter terms of moderation and patience; and yet theſe are the real ingredients of what is called magnanimity.

BUT men would poſſibly be leſs ready to obey the dictates of moderation, if it ſpoke not in the heroic ſtile of greatneſs of ſpirit, diſintereſtedneſs of ſoul, contempt of meanneſs, and the like; as the appearance and dreſs of things affect us more than the things themſelves.

FOR this reaſon we ought thankfully to confeſs our obligation to thoſe aſſiſtants and comforters of human nature, whoſe clear-ſightedneſs into our intellectual ſyſtem invented that multiplicity of denominations ſo agreeable to fancy. Out of theſe, our choice may fix upon ſuch as depict things in thoſe colours that will hit our taſte moſt pleaſurably, and operate moſt effectually on our practice.

LEAVING therefore patience and moderation to thoſe who delight in the ſhade, let magnanimity be the word with thoſe aſpiring minds who love to triumph in their virtue.

BUT let them alſo be cautious, leſt the leaven of oſtentation be not mixed in too great a proportion; for their whole purport will be loſt, if the eyes of men ſhould once diſcover that the world's applauſe is courted, rather than the approbation of their own reaſon.

As the diſcharge of our duty, while not reſulting from pure principles, is faithleſs and feigned; ſo that magnanimity which has no further exiſtence than within the proſpect of men, is falſe, and not to be depended on: as it is founded on vanity, it has no ſolid ſupport.

GRANDEUR of ſoul conſiſts in ſerenity of mind and fortitude of heart: conſcious inno-

innocence is the only baſis on which this column of internal greatneſs can be raiſed.

REAL magnanimity has the ſole and ſpecial privilege of making the moſt of all the pleaſing, and the leaſt of all the diſagreeable, occurrences of life.

MISFORTUNES having their weight in our own diſquietude, we certainly have it in our power to lighten, nay, often totally to defeat and bid them defiance, by ſuppreſſing that needleſs tribute of ſorrow and deſpondency, which weakneſs and folly are ſo ready to pay without the approbation of reaſon.

IF we ſuffer reflection to act its part, and will be at the pains to keep the voice of prejudice at a diſtance, grief and agitation, like a tempeſt whoſe violence is quickly ſpent, ſubſide very ſoon into a calm; and magnanimity, like the ſun after

ter cloudy weather, beams forth and obliterates all the former ſcene.

TIMIDITY and irreſolution are not incurable diſeaſes, unleſs the intellects themſelves are affected: while theſe remain ſound, no ſpiritual diſtemper can be mortal: judgement and reflexion, like proper medicines to a good conſtitution, are always able to effect a cure.

THAT debility of ſoul which enfeebles and enervates our diſpoſition, is generally the offspring of ignorance, and neglect of the mind.

THE ground-plot of magnanimity is a rectitude of thinking, imbibed in the very commencement of thought; which, like a polar ſtar, directs our ideas, and keeps them in the right track.

WHENCE came it of old, that ſome nations inherited, as it were, a traditional mag-

magnanimity, conveyed from father to ſon, through the ſucceſſion of centuries! Whence could this proceed, but from a peculiar ſtrain of education, begun in earlieſt infancy, and carried progreſſively through the ſtages of youth to the period of maturity.

THIS manifeſtly evinces Nature to be far from incorrigible; ſince it were abſurd to ſuppoſe, that in thoſe countries all men were born equally magnanimous: not to mention, that we daily ſee proofs, that perſons originally of unpromiſing effeminate habits, have happily reformed, and become patterns of every manly accompliſhment.

HENCE we are taught how capitally 'tis neceſſary, in the very preliminaries of education, to infuſe that ſpirit of firmneſs and ſtability, which always proves the moſt laſting ſupport of mankind, conſidered as ſeparate individuals, or as members of the community.

IT

IT lays the ſtrongeſt foundation of virtue; which is never complete, unleſs it is reſolute and intrepid, not to be moved either by threats or promiſes.

IN private life, it prepares us to act upon all emergencies with candour, friendlineſs, and honour.

A PERSON of magnanimity is above thoſe unneceſſary niceties that perplex the intercourſe of ſociety: as he is above ſelf-concealment, every one knows what he has to expect or to apprehend from him: his friends rejoice in the reliance which his character gives them upon him, and even his foes are obliged to reſpect that elevation of ſoul, which ſcorns to deceive them with a ſhew of good will.

IN public affairs, none but men of magnanimity are qualified to undertake any part. States and empires are founded on courage and magnanimity, and depend on it for their preſervation. How carefully,

then, ſhould youths, whom birth or opulence predeſtine to rule their country at home, or to ſtand forth its champions abroad, be trained up in the conſtant theory of noble ſentiments, and taught to reduce them to practice on thoſe happy occaſions, when pleaſure and ſelf-triumph concur in forwarding their exertion!

LET-

LETTER VIII.

ON

TEMPERANCE AND SOBRIETY.

DAILY obſervation will afford you continual proof, that a regular courſe of living, like wholeſome laws and regulations in a commonwealth, is the only infallible means of giving ſtrength and permanency to the conſtitution of both body and mind.

SOBRIETY and temperance, like venerable families, whoſe worth and ſervices to the public are recorded in the grateful acknowledgment of men, ſeem, by their neceſſity and importance, to have claimed more notice and praiſe than any of thoſe qualifications whoſe peculiar intent is to perfect and preſerve our perſonal faculties.

LIKE

LIKE ſovereigns eager to reward the merit of uſeful and deſerving ſubjects, we are laviſh in the titles we beſtow on ſobriety and temperance. Well indeed may we ſtile them, the pureſt fountain of health, the ſource and promoter of chearfulneſs and joy, and the ſupport of all internal and external accompliſhments; ſince they alone can lengthen youth, invigorate manhood, comfort age, and, in ſhort, animate life throughout its whole progreſs.

LIKE want of cementing materials in architecture, their abſence is an eſſential detriment to the human fabric, in which nothing can be found and laſting without them.

IN the ſame proportion as they are the cheriſhers of intellectual and moral qualities, and the co-operators in all laudable actions, their contraries are the capital obſtruc-

obſtructors to every virtue, and the foſterſires of all depravation.

TEMPERANCE is one of thoſe amiable endowments that pleaſes all to the coſt of none, and inſures to the poſſeſſor a capacity to acquire a multitude of other valuable qualifications.

TEMPERANCE well underſtood is the higheſt refinement of luxury: by never cloying us, it always keeps our palate on its appetite, and our deſires in play; and, like expectation, is itſelf equal to the pleaſure of enjoyment.

NATURE is not prone to intemperance. Imagination, heated by the contagion of example, is guilty of drawing us into exceſſes, much oftener than depravity of taſte.

WHEN we reflect on the conſequences of intemperance, 'tis ſtrange that we ſhould, from mere complaiſance, ſo often ſubmit

to

to prejudice ourſelves, when no future benefit, or even preſent pleaſure, can be pleaded as a motive. Nothing can more evidently and forcibly demonſtrate the power of cuſtom; and that there is an inherent pliancy in our make, that will not ſuffer us to be unlike thoſe whom we frequent.

FOR this reaſon, the only certificate of ſobriety is to avoid, with abhorrence and deteſtation, thoſe who have addicted themſelves to habitual revelry.

MANY a one would have lived ſoberly all the days of his life, but for having unfortunately been intimate with only one of this Bacchanalian caſt.

HE that is once initiated into this tribe, may be looked upon as a man in a conſumption; from whence ſeldom any body recovers.

THE preſervation of peace in domeſtic ſociety, and that of interior ſerenity within ourſelves, the two grand points to which human wiſdom ſhould ſteer, are abſolute ſtrangers to that claſs of mortals: we are more ſurprized to hear of their meeting peaceably, than of their quarrels and diſturbances.

THE principal pleaſure of life conſiſts in a uniform tenour of content and ſatisfaction, neither ſwelling to extravagance and exceſs, nor falling away to apathy and indolence: but perſons of this ſort are uſually either inflated with madneſs, or ſunk in ſtupidity.

INTEMPERANCE is ſooneſt puniſhed, of all irregularities: its effects are commonly at no great diſtance from their cauſe: youth quickly dwindles into age, by the rapid enervation of the bodily frame, and the ſpeedy decay of the mind.

THE

THE rewards of ſobriety, on the contrary, are of an equal duration with our exiſtence; and the ſooner they begin, the longer they laſt.

THE fruits of ſobriety are not only remarkable in the ſtrength and vigour of body that keep company even with years, but are ſtill more minutely conſpicuous in the vivacity of ſoul that enlivens the exertion of our faculties while young, and the genial ſerenity that emulates the chearfulneſs of youth in our latter date.

ALL exterior qualifications and all interior excellence depend on temperance, like children on parents, for their birth and nouriſhment.

As they flow from the juſt regulation of body and mind, when theſe are diſordered, or by repeated ſhocks falling to ruin, they muſt of courſe be neceſſarily deſtroyed; or, which is much worſe, are

liable to the moſt fatal perverſion: in the ſame manner as the unfortunate progeny of the iniquitous are either conſigned to neglect and miſery; or, which is ſtill more woeful, are tutored in all the criminal arts of perdition.

WITHOUT ſobriety courage degenerates into ferocity, and proves more detrimental to itſelf and others, than the baſeſt cowardice, and the moſt abject demeanour.

ACTIVITY, which, while under the patronage of diſcretion, moves with ſecurity and ſucceſs; when unbridled by intemperance runs wild, and is the more dangerous in proportion to its owner's averſion to indolence.

WIT and livelineſs, the embelliſhers of ſociety, whenever they break looſe from the bonds of decency and decorum, become the moſt pernicious nuiſance, and often occaſion more miſchief in one hour than a whole life of dullneſs could perpetrate.

WHILE we abſtain from intemperance, we chearfully purſue the courſe of our vocation: labour ſits lightly upon us, and we begrudge not to ſubmit patiently, and without repinement, to the condition which our deſtiny has aſſigned to us. In other words, we remain capable of enjoying that portion of happineſs which falls to the lot of every human being.

BUT as ſoon as we renounce the paths of ſobriety, a fatal change is gradually operated: we forget the duties of our calling; our imaginations are elevated above the level of our circumſtances; we fret at our ſituation, and envy that of others. As judgement and reflection have no ſeat in our councils, all is tranſacted according to the whim of the day; and we go on, entangling ourſelves in difficulties and diſtreſſes, till we ſink into irretrievable ruin.

INTEMPERANCE, by ſetting all the paſſions at liberty, breaks down all the fences of moderation, honour, and honeſty; like

an army that mutinies through relaxation of diſcipline, and want of abilities in the commanders, every irregular appetite is indulged, every evil habit predominates, and confuſion inhabits wherever we go.

As where intemperance dwells no ſafety can reſide, the maxim of ſelf-defence and preſervation expels us from the preſence of our acquaintance; like thoſe ſad objects in whom extinction of reaſon has kindled a dreadful propenſity to all manner of outrageouſneſs.

COMMISERATION and pity, being only the lawful claim of the unhappy, are no more due to thoſe who plunge into the horrors of intemperance, than to a man who ruſhes upon deſtruction from wantonneſs and bravado.

As ſuch a ſuicide intails contempt on its perpetrator, execration is what theſe artificers of their own wretchedneſs have a right to expect, not only from others but

but alſo from themſelves, when want of opportunities or means to baniſh conſideration obtrudes upon them a lucid interval. Like a ſevere judge, it puts the ſword of juſtice into their hands, and forces them to become their own executioners.

In the midſt of their infamy, as if nature had ordained that they ſhould pronounce their own condemnation, 'tis common to hear them zealouſly reprehend in others, that which their very guilt prevents them, through the deprivation of ſenſibility, from perceiving in themſelves.

Such is the fatal tendency of this abominable vice, that it ſeldom fails to produce others: like the head of a gang of malefactors, it is perpetually employed in forming aſſociates.

If it does not aſſault the traveller on the road, nor break open doors in ſearch of ſpoil and plunder, yet it unlocks the heart, and divulges your ſecrets, with

thoſe of your familiars and acquaintance. Like a ferocious animal, whoſe untractable nature no arts can tame, and whoſe very play is dangerous to unwary careſſers; it often, without deſign, wounds the peace of families, blaſts the character of perſons who might have lived unſtained but for your indiſcretion; ſets friends at variance; renders enmity irreconcileable; and breeds ſuſpicions, jealouſies, and hatred, where the moſt cordial union had before ſubſiſted.

SUCH are the ſports and paſtimes of men addicted to intemperance. They ſeldom fail to employ that remnant of capacity to diſcourſe which unluckily ſurvives the death of reaſon, in topics which repentance vainly ſtrives to obliterate.

BUT were intemperance to debar itſelf the perpetration of miſchiefs abroad, it commits enough at home, by the wants, miſeries, and diſtreſſes, endleſs to enumerate,

rate, which, like ruffians, accompany this merciless dealer of destruction.

INTEMPERANCE, in this respect, is often like a tyrant, who lives in peace with his neighbours, and confines his cruelty and oppression within the circle of his own dominions.

No condition can secure intemperance from punishment. Present affluence, like a screen, frequently serves but to hide the prospect of approaching ruin.

As care is inseparably requisite, not only to amass, but also to preserve what has been obtained, that fundamental support of opulence giving way, the whole pile must needs totter and shake, and at last tumble to the ground.

HENCE it is we daily witness the desolation of families, whose wealth, although considerable, was not proof against the imperceptible ways and means that are found

found to undermine the feeble and crazy devotees to intemperance. Their weak and impotent mind, aſſaulted through thoſe breaches of conſtitution that have impaired their judgement and reaſon, like a diſmantled town, lies open to the depredations of any enemy.

But if, inſtead of riches, fate has ſtationed you on the field of toil; ſhould intemperance, like a falſe friend by whoſe inſtigations real ones are diſcarded, turn induſtry and labour out of your dwelling; then woe to the woman who bears your name, and to the children who call you father.

A man whoſe name is fixed on the liſt of intemperance, is like one againſt whom a ſtatute of bankruptcy has been iſſued; his character remains doubtful ever after.

Trust and confidence fly from want of ſobriety, as travellers from a bad inn, with a reſolution never to return.

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LIKE a houſe of evil fame, which renders its tenants infamous, intemperance makes its votaries utterly contemptible. Reſpect and eſteem, like viſitors ill uſed, bid them an everlaſting adieu; and ſhould they (through a wonderful change) reform their conduct, the ſevere world treats them like repenting proſtitutes, and gives no credit to the alteration.

THERE is not in the whole circle of vices, one whoſe commencements are ſeemingly more innocent: they almoſt coincide with, and are hardly diſtinguiſhable from, the convenient and neceſſary comforts of nurture and refreſhment: for which reaſon we ſhould ſtand more circumſpectly upon our guard, and give admiſſion to no exceſſes, whatever denomination they may aſſume, whether of tranſient indulgence, good-fellowſhip, feſtivity, or any other. They only ſerve to deceive us in the ſame manner as falſe colours, which freebooters hang out at ſea in order to decoy the unſuſpecting.

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A SAD concomitant of intemperance is its longevity. Where it once unfortunately fixes, like plants ingrafted on the body of a tree, it takes root, and incorporates with our exiſtence until its final diſſolution. When we are paſt the commiſſion of all other bodily ſins, nature ſtill retains the unhappy capacity of degrading itſelf with this ſhameful one. To its own peculiar curſe of incorrigibility, it adds the more fatal and deplorable one of conferring ſtrength and permanency upon every criminal habit we have contracted: like the pernicious favourite of a deluded monarch, who, not content with gratifying his own profligate diſpoſition, awakens and encourages his maſter's evil inclinations, and becomes a firebrand of iniquity and miſchief to the whole ſtate.

LET-

LETTER IX.

ON

PROPRIETY OF BEHAVIOUR.

ATTENTION to the daily tranſactions of ſociety will convince you, that perſonal deportment always decides of the attachment or diſlike, of the eſteem or ſlight, which individuals entertain for each other.

MANKIND judge by appearances, from a very obvious and ſufficient reaſon; which is, that people generally are what they appear.

IT is difficult, not to ſay impracticable, to preſerve long an aſſumed and feigned character. Nature is ever recalling us to our original reality; and art grows tired at

at laſt with working againſt the grain: like a diſappointed huſbandman, who refuſes to waſte his labour in a ſtubborn ſoil.

'TIS not in the human diſpoſition to bear with ſo heavy a burden, as that of perpetual conſtraint and artifice; which, like clothes that fit us not, muſt ſit very uneaſy.

HE that propoſes to recommend himſelf by propriety of behaviour, muſt ſtudy to act his own part; and to avoid the affectation that follows, from undertaking one which is deſigned for another.

AFFECTATION is a great cheat, and always betrays thoſe who employ him.

WE cannot pay ourſelves a worſe compliment than by affectation; 'tis acknowledging that we ought to be what we are not.

AFFECTATION, like a maſk, may conceal;

ceal; but is ſtill known to be a falſe face.

People hate affectation more than any other failing; becauſe it is uſed to hide all the others, in order to give us an air of perfection and ſuperiority that we have no right to wear.

'Tis wrong to imagine that we are beloved for having no failings at all: a few of them are neceſſary, to bring us to the level of other men, who would otherwiſe repay our faultleſſneſs with more envy than admiration.

We may obſerve, that thoſe characters in novels and romances that are the moſt perfect, afford us the leaſt pleaſure, and claim the leaſt of our favour and attention: they are too far removed from the condition of humanity: we feel no intereſt for perſons who have ſo few concerns with the frailties that are common to us all, and which

which, by approximating us, obviate the diſſatisfaction ariſing from too ſuperior merit.

THE great art of behaviour is to excel others without appearing to endeavour it: this produces the ſame effect as liberality in a wealthy man, who makes no parade of his riches; we gain reſpect without envy.

THE native ſenſe of equity is ſo profoundly rooted in our mind, that we cannot help paying interior acknowledgment of ſuperiority to thoſe who deſerve it.

BUT, as if it were ordained that none ſhould arrogate the execution of juſtice in his own behalf, the moment we take upon us to aſſert our own qualifications, we forfeit the right of receiving the benefit of that aſſertion from others.

MEN are all jealous of their reſpective privileges: if we have the happineſs of

of poſſeſſing great talents and qualifications, others have the beſtowing of laurels and praiſes: like a ſovereign, who, tho' unequal in perſonal worth to the ſubject to whom he adjudges rewards, enjoys the ſole prerogative of conferring them.

DIFFIDENCE and modeſty, while ſincere and unaffected, are the moſt engaging recommendations to merit. Modeſty repreſſes that needleſs effervescency of ſpirit, which is always prompting us to be foremoſt; and diffidence prevents the tyrannical overbearing of conceit.

WHEN merit comes thus attended, it makes, as it were, a triumphal entry into our heart. We then approach it as we would a king who tempers his majeſty and grandeur with mildneſs and affability.

THE weight of ſuperior merit is light and eaſy, while we are under no apprehenſions of paying the invidious price which

oſtentation exacts, by making us too ſenſible of our inferiority.

CONDESCENSION to the level of inferiors is like a feaſt given by a great man to his tenants: 'tis in both caſes an invitation to be benefited at free coſt.

LET us never point out that peculiar ſpecies of merit which fancy has adopted as our indiſputable property: people never doubt a perſon's excellence in any particular quality, ſo much as when he hints his good opinion of himſelf in that reſpect.

THE reaſon is, that by too fatal an experience, we are all convinced of the blindneſs of ſelf-judgment.

THE method of winning aſſent, is leſs by an eloquent diſplay of reaſoning and argumentation, than by a dubitancy (if one may ſo expreſs it) in what one propoſes:

poſes: the firſt, from its very nature, anticipates the deciſion of others by publiſhing our own; while the ſecond obligingly gives room for precedence to that of others; and often ſecures their concurrence on that very account.

THIS method baniſhes that air of authority and preſumption which attends poſitive aſſertions, however ſupported by truth and good ſenſe, and leaves the liberty of diſſenting; which, though a man will not take, yet he will ever be diſpleaſed not to have.

GENTLENESS of behaviour and ſmoothneſs of expreſſion will always gain ſome ſhare of perſuaſion and favour, by that ſhew of reſpect and deference which captivates even the moſt averſe to our deſigns; while, on the contrary, ſtrength of thought and powerfulneſs of language, diveſted of affability, like the hoſtile preparations of an enemy, ſet men upon their

guard, and induce them, as it were, to repel force with force.

DECENCY of perſonal behaviour is the eloquence of the body, as a happineſs of thoughts and words is that of the mind.

DECENCY proceeds from diſcernment and judiciouſneſs of thinking.

IT requires more diſcrimination than falls to the lot of ſhallow people, to behave with juſtneſs and propriety.

THESE are the conſtituents of true taſte, which is the knowledge of the peculiarities and appurtenances of place, time, and perſons.

TASTE, in this inſtance, is the heraldry of the mind: it regulates the mode of our behaviour, ſuitably to the difference of characters and tempers, and the various circumſtances of things: in the ſame manner

ner as the other is converſant in the appropriation of exterior honours to each individual, according to the rank he holds in ſociety.

TASTE, in ſocial intercourſe, is the reſult of a man's conſideration what beſt befits himſelf, and is due to others.

YOUTH and age have their different rules of behaving, as well as the higher and lower conditions in life; and the increachment on either department ſubjects the tranſgreſſor equally to ridicule.

YET what more frequent than to ſee perſons, whom Nature meant to render venerable by gravity, wantonly running after the levities of their former years!

GRAVITY is a badge of diſtinction and reſpect, which age alone impowers men to aſſume, without incurring the cenſure of

inconſiſtency and affectation: like veterans in an army, whoſe experience and ſervices intitle them to wear ſome exterior token of merit.

THE purſuit of juvenilities in a man whoſe date of life ſhould claſs him above them, is like a noble perſonage's degrading himſelf by aſſociating with the dregs of the populace.

THE contraſt is not leſs diſagreeable, when young men give themſelves airs of ſelf-ſufficiency and knowledge of things to which their years can afford no pretence. 'Tis like uſurping an eſtate to which the world knows we have no right.

NOTHING more uſually contributes to the excluſion from the ſociety of both the old and the young, than that groundleſs arrogation of premature ſcience in worldly affairs.

ELDERLY

ELDERLY men have a natural privilege to claim a better inſight into things than the young; and will conſequently treat an attempt to equality in theſe matters, as impertinence and preſumption.

YOUNG men, on the other hand, will not patiently ſuffer their coevals to pretend to more judgement and penetration than themſelves.

ONE of the moſt common errors we fall into in our ordinary behaviour, is not ſo much the valuing ourſelves on thoſe qualifications we have, as on thoſe we have not: 'tis the ſame as if a man, after feeding his imagination with vain proſpects of opulence, ſhould actually think he were become rich.

THIS error leads into numberleſs others: the more we endeavour to excel, the leſs we ſucceed: as thoſe who travel out of their own road, are liable to perpetual deviations.

HENCE let us, like a general who reviews his forces before battle, make an exact eſtimation of our abilities, ere we truſt ourſelves to their exertion.

'TIS a great knowledge to know how far we can depend on ourſelves. The reaſon we generally are ſo ignorant in this reſpect is, that a ſelf-examination hurts our pride: like men in buſineſs whoſe affairs are in ſuch diſorder as not to brook an inſpection.

WHILE we adhere to the management of our own proper talents, 'tis like an army's engaging on the ground its leaders have choſen; but to over-rate them, is like an officer's exceeding his orders.

THE capacity of each individual, is a commiſſion received from nature; which he is fully to execute; but never to attempt to go beyond it.

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THIS commiſſion is ever to be preſent to our mind, as a leſſon we can never too much ſtudy to underſtand; ſince proſperity or adverſity flow from our remiſſneſs or application.

To miſtake our capacity, by undertaking what was never its deſtination to perform, is the daily ſource of moſt miſcarriages. 'Tis like going to war with mechanic utenſils inſtead of military weapons, or like working with tools of which we have not learned the uſe.

THIS frequent miſunderſtanding of ourſelf is derived from that immoderation of ſoul, which, by graſping at all things, compaſſes fairly none. Not content with that ſhare of capacity we are really endowed with, we aim at univerſality; as an avaricious trader, unſatisfied with lawful gains, ventures beyond the bounds by which the extent of his commerce is limited.

BUT as confiſcation of his effects is the conſequence of his temerity, in the ſame manner our raſh endeavours to ſhine in all things, ſuggeſted by jealouſy and impatience at the pre-eminency of others, uſually terminate in our ſhame and humiliation.

THE cauſe of all this miſchief is, that we do not ſet a due value on the happineſs of being compleat and perfect in any one attainment; and yet if we are at the pains to compare the ſeparate merit of all who have been remarkably eminent, we ſhall find that few, very few, were ever truly ſuch in more than one ſingle talent.

PERFECTION is a tree with many branches; every one of which, like a ſprig of laurel, ſufficiently decorates the poſſeſſor.

WE need not repine at the endowments of others: Nature is an impartial parent, and

and has made no ſuch unequal diſtribution of power, as to enable any favourite ſon to aſpire at univerſal ſupremacy throughout every province and department of genius.

However great our abilities may be, moderation is the only charm that ſecures them from malevolence, and renders their ſplendour ſupportable.

The riches of the mind, like exterior wealth, are not to be diſplayed, but on occaſions of neceſſity and real uſe.

We ſhould always ſtrive to make our minds, as well as our perſons, keep company with thoſe we aſſociate with; and to go, as it were, hand in hand.

Let us never be earneſt in taking the lead in converſation. People hate to follow where they have not choſen their conductors; and to preſume on the ſolidity and expertneſs

expertneſs of our judgement, is a tacit undervaluing that of others.

THERE is nothing of which we are more jealous than of our judgement. The flights of imagination, the ſallies of wit, the ſprightlineſs of humour we are willing to give up to the claim of others; but we cannot bear that we ſhould be denied to judge of imagination, wit, and humour. Theſe three, though pleaſing, are not neceſſary requiſites: but we all look upon judgement as a qualification indiſpenſible in what is deemed a man of ſenſe; and who will conſent to be thought otherwiſe?

THE ſupreme art of converſation is rather to be civil and pliant, than ſmart and pleaſant. We are all taken with civility; but pleaſantry, like ſauces, requires ſo much nicety that too much or too little ſeaſoning is generally the caſe.

WHEN a man unaſked, and of his own accord, engroſſes the attention of compa-

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ny, and would appear more entertaining than others, he makes, as it were, a ſilent agreement to realiſe his pretenſions; or, if he ſhould fail, to undergo their ſlight and deriſion, as a chaſtiſement of his preſumption.

The ſcale of diſapprobation or applauſe is ſo eaſily turned againſt us, by the native propenſity of men to under-rate what is not their own, that we ſhould be very cautious in ſubjecting ourſelves to the ſentence and opinion of others; which is ſomething like a city's ſurrendering at diſcretion.

Of all things, we ſhould beware of bringing into company any ſecret conviction that we are at the top of it: 'twill never lurk ſo deep, but a diſcovery will be made: the conſequence will be, an unanimous trial to ſpy out our weak ſides; and it were ſurpriſing if, ſo beſet, we ſhould be able to conceal them. The caſe is juſt like that of an ambitious prince, whoſe

whoſe deſigns, once known, immediately occaſion a confederacy to ſuppreſs him.

MILDNESS and placidity are the patrons, under whoſe auſpicious influence we meet with a favourable reception every-where.

THE manifeſtation of good-nature and ſuavity of temper is what moſt effectually prepoſſeſſes affection and benevolence. It indicates the worthineſs of the ſoul, as a florid look is the ſign of a healthy conſtitution.

AN air of benignity is the good-breeding of the mind: it denotes its participation with the body's exterior deportment, and gives ſpirit and meaning to the cuſtomary forms of civility.

A KIND and affable countenance pleaſes beyond beauty in woman, or comelineſs in man; becauſe it is the image of thoſe qualities that are moſt acceptable to mankind;

kind; a humane heart, and an obliging diſpoſition: like the picture of a friend, we view it with complacency, for the ſake of him whom it repreſents.

THE impreſſion made by genius, wit, knowledge, and learning, is that of ſurprize and admiration: but as friendſhip is a tribute which interior moral excellence has the ſole right of exacting, thoſe who are well read in human nature will always court acceptance and eſteem rather by an appearance of goodneſs, than by a parade of capacity.

ONE of the moſt important precepts relating to our behaviour in ſociety, is to repreſs every emotion, and, if poſſible, to eradicate every ſeed of envy, by frankly allowing to every one that degree of merit he is juſtly intitled to: we thereby effectually ſecure the acknowledgement of our own; as the due fulfilling of treaties by a nation empowers it to challenge, with pro-

priety, a reciprocation of honour and fidelity from others.

To perſons of ſuperior worth and delicate feeling, nothing is more ſatisfactory and endearing than a judicious commendation. On this account, let us never be ſparing of our praiſes, when we can confer them with candour and truth. As much as flattery diſgraces, ſo much is praiſe becoming, when dictated by ſincerity, and flowing from the effuſion of an undiſſembling heart.

FLATTERY is like the homage paid by diſloyal ſubjects to an uſurper; of the falſehood of which the receiver muſt be conſcious. But praiſe truly deſerved, is like the payment of legal demands: we take it without bluſhing. As punctuality in the diſcharge of debts encourages further credit, the beſtowing of merited encomiums promotes the exertion of thoſe virtues, of which they are the ſalary and recompence.

LET-

LETTER X.

ON

FORETHOUGHT AND REFLECTION.

INURE yourſelf betimes to habits of warineſs and deliberation: they are like ſcouts in war, who precede an army for its preſervation againſt any ſudden attack.

HURRY and precipitation with great abilities, are like bad officers with good troops, a perpetual ſcene of mutual embarraſſment and confuſion.

COOLNESS of thought and ſedateneſs of reflection are the council of ſtate of the mind: they take cognizance of all our deſigns while yet in embrio, and digeſt and prepare them for action.

CIRCUMSPECTION, like ſome warlike implements, is both offenſive and defenſive. In moderate capacities, it is a ſhield of defence, and, like an intrenchment, ſerves to protect us againſt ſuperior forces: in eminent ones, it is like reconnoitring the enemy, and putting on armour before we go to battle.

As wit and vivacity often run us into danger, when they take the ſtart of reflection, the combination of all three is neceſſary to add ſecurity to ſplendor. While the latter is wanting, 'tis like the ſeparation of a powerful ally, whoſe importance alone ſupported the common cauſe.

WIT and vivacity unguarded, are like ſoldiers who venture on ſome deſperate enterprize without a leader.

BY indulging an impetuous vein of livelineſs, we ſeldom ſhine but to our own coſt; as imagination, like a quicker-paced com-

companion, uſually leaves judgement far behind.

EAGERNESS for admiration is the general failing that precipitates the diſplay of our abilities: but when this comes unaccompanied with eſteem, like Pyrrhus's victories over the Romans, it hurts our cauſe much more than it inhances our reputation.

BY the ſame rule that generoſity alone can render opulence reſpectable, people may admire our abilities; but only the proper management of them procures eſteem.

A THOUGHTFUL ſilent perſon is leſs diſpleaſing, even in his taciturnity, than one of a lively diſpoſition, whoſe ſtarts and flaſhes are not managed with propriety: the former, if unable to excite pleaſure, will not create impatience: but the brilliancy of the latter, like the momentary ſun in a rainy day, ſhews itſelf but tranſiently, and to no purpoſe.

WIT becomes diſguſting, either through unſeaſonableneſs or ſuperabundance, as ornaments in architecture by their too great number, or injudicious diſpoſition.

THE art of bringing reflection home, diſtinguiſhes the man of ſenſe and conduct from the mere wit and genius: the latter's intellectual powers, though much the ſuperior, are too deeply involved in general ſpeculations to give attention to thoſe particular occurrences, which ought to determine the exerciſe or ſuſpenſion of his talents.

THE truth is, that too great a dedication of our thoughts to theory, generally prevents our application of them to practice; and inſpires ſuch an immoderate deſire of appearing witty and knowing, that all propriety of time, place, and perſons, is utterly forgotten.

WIT without reflection is like beauty without modeſty, pernicious to the owner.

THE

THE company of wits is courted; but we prefer the intimacy of a man of thoughtfulneſs and reflection. The moſt we can promiſe ourſelves from the former, is diverſion and merriment; but we depend on the latter for ſolid ſubſtantial ſervices. The firſt is like ſunſhine without rain, pleaſant but unprofitable: the ſecond, like a moiſt but fertile climate, which, tho' cloudy and leſs enlivening, yet repays the dweller with plenty.

FORETHOUGHT leads, as it were, the van of our enterprizes; and, like pioneers in a ſiege, forwards our approaches to ſucceſs, by clearing the way before us.

No inſtance appears on record, that any capital error was ever committed where the plan was laid, and the meaſures were taken, in conſequence of due deliberation.

THERE is ſcarce any ſort of difficulty but may be overcome, or diminiſhed by

dint of conſideration: without it, the minuteſt obſtacle is able to retard us. Cæſar could build a bridge over the Rhine; but a ſmall rivulet can impede the march of an army for want of a pontoon.

MISTAKES in life are like falſe ſteps in walking, moſtly owing to haſtineſs and precipitancy.

OUR frequent errors proceed much leſs from defect of capacity, than impetuoſity of paſſion; the impatience of Nature to obtain its deſire, ſpurring us on to compaſs the end, ere we have provided ourſelves with the means.

A MIND under the guidance of reflection, is like a ſteed well managed; whoſe motions, while obedient to the bridle, are full of order and comelineſs.

THE very appearance of reflection enables us to make a figure in converſation.

'Tis

'Tis to the mind what decency of apparel is to the body; it raiſes an opinion of our capacity, as the other prepoſſeſſes in favour of our circumſtances.

AN air of forethought is the livery of good-ſenſe; with which even folly may ſometimes deceive the eyes of reaſon.

BUT this very deception proves the greatneſs of its uſe and efficacy; and that the wearing of it is neceſſary to gain reſpect, as a faſhionable dreſs is requiſite to ſecure admittance into polite company.

THE attention which is commanded by a mere outſide of thinking and circumſpection, is an earneſt of the intrinſic value of what it repreſents; in the ſame manner as the civilities we ſhew to one whom we miſtake for another, are an argument how much we prize the perſon himſelf.

DELIBERATENESS and reſerve always merit, and always meet with ſome degree of ſucceſs.

IF they do not carry the point in agitation, they ſtill intitle us to ſecurity, by not venturing beyond our ſtrength; which alone is a conſiderable advantage.

THEY are the firſt ſtep towards winning approbation, by that calmneſs and ſerenity which are their peculiar attendants. Theſe convey a favourable impreſſion of the mind, as reputable perſons vouch for the character of thoſe whom they accompany.

WE entertain a higher notion of the dexterity of an artiſt, whom time and experience may have improved, than of one who wants thoſe advantages. By the ſame rule we pay more deference to what flows with a ſeemingneſs of preparation, than to what is hurried forth by ſtarts and ſallies, without an apparent ſufficiency of

leiſure to ponder on what is to be delivered.

As the generality of men do not immediately perceive the juſtice or demerits of a cauſe; a haſty determination takes the ſcale of judgment out of their hands. While it inſultingly ſets our penetration above theirs, it invades their privilege of thinking, by anticipating it; and often robs us of the ſatisfaction we ſhould have received in their aſſenting to our opinion, by preventing their due examination of the ſubject in queſtion.

By this arrogant celerity in pronouncing our own judgments, we virtually refuſe the aſſiſtance and co-operation of other people's thoughts. 'Tis like a proud man who is above accepting relief in his neceſſities.

On the contrary, by repreſſing this dangerous forwardneſs, we enter into a co-

partnerſhip

partnerſhip of thinking, and bid fairer, by this conjunction of mental powers, to ſpeak judiciouſly; as the combination of ſeveral corps contributes to form the ſtrength of an army, and enable it to proceed to action.

A PRECIPITATE preclufion of other people's judgments, in order to publiſh our own, is aiming at a monopoly of ſenſe and penetration; to which we have no more right in the intellectual ſyſtem, than foreſtallers in the commercial one.

'TIS the ſame preſumption in one perſon affectedly to antecede others in the manifeſtation of his own thoughts, as it would be in the commander of a ſmall detachment to venture an engagement without waiting for the main body.

THE laws of good-breeding are never obſerved with truth and perfection, till we are diſengaged from ſelfiſh prepoſſeſſions,

ſions, and convinced that our intellectual wants are only to be ſupplied by the benefit of ſociety. But this peremptory preference of our own ideas is an abſolute diſdain to aſſociate our capacity with that of others; and is no leſs abuſive and inſolent, than if a man ſhould, without aſſigning any reaſon, challenge the precedence in all companies.

NOTHING gains aſcendancy ſooner than condeſcenſion, chiefly of a ſuperior capacity to an inferior one. 'Tis a compliment to our vanity which we repay in proportion as we feel how little we are able to pretend to an equality.

BY ſhewing a due attention to what is tranſacting in the minds of others, we not only treat them with civility, but indirectly avail ourſelves of their parts, to pave the way for a ſafer uſe of our own, and to give them a convenient meaſure of preparation.

A DUE ſpace of premeditation on the notions of others, uſhers in our own thoughts with weight and dignity: it removes that ſuſpicion of inconſideration and levity, which always attend s our inattention to their ideas.

BUT the prime argument to enforce a previous inſpection into the minds of others, is, that the ſecureſt judgments are generally formed out of the coalition of divers opinions; as the beſt governments from the judicious mixture of the ſeveral kinds.

THIS impartial arrangement and mutual adoption of our various notions, excluſive of its utility in the inveſtigation of truth, is like the right obſervance of time in muſic. It contributes to the harmony and good intelligence of individuals. The only road to union and reciprocal toleration, is by admittting every one to make the moſt of his capacity. Diſcuſſions in private ſociety ſhould be carried on like the free and in-

compulſive

compulſive deliberations of a well-regulated Commonwealth, where every member enjoys the liberty of his vote, and, content with that juſt and natural privilege, acquieſces in the deciſion reſulting from the ſeveral opinions delivered on the ſubject in debate.

To utter one's ſentiments without ſome viſible pauſe for the exertion of thought, ſubjects them very juſtly to a ſevere ſcrutiny; for which reaſon it is always adviſable to leave a proper ſpace of ſilence between a queſtion and anſwer: this done unaffectedly, prepoſſeſſes the audience in our favour.

As much honour is obtained by heſitation in doubtful caſes, as by a ſpeedy determination, however juſt and appoſite. A ſlow and circumſpectful anſwer we readily attribute to a calm examination of the matter propoſed, and pay more deference to it accordingly; while, on the con-

contrary, a perſon of vivacity, who ſpeaks readily to the point in agitation, is often miſtruſted from his very diligence in anſwering; the difficulty of the ſubject requiring, in our apprehenſion, more weighing and conſideration than he has uſed.

PEOPLE whoſe intellects are all life and penetration, are naturally quick at expreſſion, and may indubitably form as ſure a judgment as thoſe who are leſs forward; but ſtill, unfortunately for the cauſe they maintain, they ſeem by their haſtineſs to ſpeak at a venture: while, as it is in reality accompanied with more ſecurity, a deliberate and wary method of ſpeaking carries with it a greater appearanceand probability of thinking and forecaſt.

LETTER XI.

HOW TO JUDGE OF MANKIND.

WHEN we ſurvey the tempers and inclinations of men, we are too apt to form our opinion of individuals according to what they ſay or do with leaſt premeditation.

BUT this rule is far from being infallible: it often happens that perſons who were primitively under the influence of ſome vice or failing, although they may have conquered it, yet are not wholly able to prevent its rebellious motions; which, like male-contents in a ſtate, can never be intirely eradicated.

THE native appetite, like an ill-defeated enemy, ſtill keeps the field: though we may reſtrain its bad conſequences, we

muſt

muſt, however, expect to wage a perpetual war with it. Hence it falls out that when we are off our guard, it breaks in upon us, and ſhews how difficult it is totally to ſuppreſs what is bred, as it were, in the very core of our nature.

THE only juſtifiable method of judging men is from their actions: yet even here we are liable to infinite errors. As the actions of men derive their moral goodneſs from their motives, moſt excellent effects may frequently be produced by very bad cauſes.

THE whole tenour of a man's conduct muſt be taken into contemplation, in order to pronounce a juſt verdict upon him. When we ſee the practice of virtue continued through every act and ſcene of his life, it were the higheſt injuſtice to deny ſuch a character the appellation of good and virtuous: diſſimulation and falſhood can laſt but a while; and it were abſurd

abſurd that a man ſhould be thought capable of acting always the part of virtue, without being really virtuous.

WE are not to frame our notions of any one from broken detached pieces of his behaviour in particular inſtances; as all men have their days of inconſiſtency, and the beſt are not always good, nor the worſt always bad.

To know a man thoroughly, 'tis not enough to be converſant with him in thoſe matters that reſult from his profeſſion and general way of living: we ought alſo to have the opportunity of examining his privacy; for there only men dare to diveſt themſelves of thoſe exteriorities, which they are ſo careful to put on in the face of the world.

WHEN the eye of the public is no longer upon us, we naturally remit of our ſhrewdneſs and circumſpection; which,

like ſhackles, ſit cumberſome even on thoſe who are moſt uſed to them.

MEN are in this reſpect like actors; who are always glad to reaſſume their own, however they are able to ſhine and command applauſe in a fictitious, character.

FORMALITIES are to our actions what dreſs is to our bodies; they cover and conceal all blemiſhes and defects.

As we cannot enjoy a perfect and complete view of a perſon's corporeal beauty or deformity till the apparel is thrown off, we never acquire a true knowledge of another's interiority, but in thoſe hours of relaxation that permit him to caſt off artifice, and return to the ſimplicity of pure nature.

THERE is in the worthieſt human compoſitions, ſuch a mixture of things reſpectable, and of others as deſerving of cenſure, that

that when we become acquainted with the reality of ſome people, 'tis with the utmoſt difficulty we can make their merit preponderate in their favour: we are forced to ſummon all our equity, to prevent us from undervaluing them, on account of the diſguſt we receive from the multiplicity of their imperfections.

'Tis generally with perſons of ſuperior worth, that foibles of the moſt diſagreeable ſort are found; as if Nature delighted in pulling down with one hand, what ſhe has been erecting with the other.

Hence it is that thoſe to whom we grant the title of Men of Abilities, are commonly ſhy of expoſing themſelves to the fullneſs of domeſtic inſpection; from the conſciouſneſs that they riſk the loſing of that reputation in private, which they have obtained in public.

Men of this caſt are uſually of more utility to the world in general, than agree-

able to their friends in particular: we reap more benefit from their ſolitude than from their ſociety.

Of all characters, none are more deſirable for the improvement of ſocial enjoyments, than thoſe whoſe knowledge of active life is connected with an obſerving inquiſitive diſpoſition, cultivated by ſtudy and reading.

When ſuch men open their lips, it is a great misfortune they ſhould ſuffer interruption from the numerous upſtarts and pretenders to abilities that infeſt ſociety. By paying due attention to the diſcourſe of a few ſuch perſons, more of the world is learned, and we are better enabled to judge of mankind, than by the limited experience that falls to the ſhare of many others.

Converſation is the criterion of almoſt every man's intellectual merit. Though a ſenſible perſon may treſpaſs with his tongue, either by running into error, or by dwelling

ling on ſubjects too trite and inſignificant; yet as in general his thoughts are juſt, and his matter well choſen, he will alſo expreſs himſelf with judiciouſneſs at leaſt, if not with elegance.

In our judgments of men, we are too prone to conſtrue every thing according to our own feelings, and to imagine that others are liable to be affected by the ſame cauſes, and in a ſimilar manner with ourſelves. Hence it is that we are ſo often diſſatisfied with others, and they with us.

As every one has his peculiarities of taſte and fancy, 'tis only by ſcrutinizing them that we diſcover the proprietor's real diſpoſition: they not only influence both the virtues and vices of men, but are often the reſult of them.

When we propoſe acquiring the friendſhip or good-will of another, we often miſs our aim, by uſing thoſe methods which a too general ſyſtem of prudence directs to be followed; without conſidering that the

rules adopted in theory are liable to perpetual exceptions, when reduced to practice.

EVERY individual is actuated by his own particular motives; like various machineries by their ſecret ſprings. As by learning the conſtruction of theſe, we find in what manner they are to be uſed, ſo by the careful obſervation of a man's native bent and propenſity, we are taught the method of gaining an aſcendency over him.

THIS inſight of others is acquired by uniting with their ideas and purſuits. Pliancy is a key that unlocks the inmoſt receſſes of a man's heart: by falling into the track of his occupations or amuſements, you travel, as it were, ſide by ſide; and have an opportunity, by perceiving whither his inclination leads him, to humour and act in conformity with it. This is the only ſure road to ſucceſs, when amity and favour is our final deſign.

THE

THE great ſtumbling-block to rectitude of judgment, is jealouſy; from which hardly any human being is totally exempt. It is perpetually employed in diſcovering imperfections, and diminiſhing good qualities. As the ſelfiſhneſs of mankind is ſuch, that they are afraid of meeting with aught more excellent than is in their own poſſeſſion, they induſtriouſly endeavour to repreſent things in a light that will not prove unfavourable to their vanity. Where facts are too glaring to be denied, they are careful to qualify them in ſuch a manner, that although truth is not abſolutely ſuppreſſed, yet 'tis darkened, and not ſuffered to appear in its due luſtre.

THUS it is with tranſcendent worth. Beings of an inferior claſs cannot bear its radiancy; and are unable and averſe to behold it otherwiſe than as we do the ſun, through the interpoſition of a cloud.

LETTER XII.

ON

DISSIMULATION.

AS diſſimulation is oftener uſed to hide a bad than a good cauſe, our character will certainly become queſtionable, if we frequently practiſe it; for we only diſſemble through fear or ſhame.

IT were paying too great a compliment to diſſimulation to give it a name among the virtues. 'Tis, with reſpect to them, what a privy door is to the principal gate of a palace; the paſſage through which is public and honourable, while the other is uſed for meaner intercourſe.

DISSIMULATION is at beſt but a ſhift; as we never ſtoop to it but for want of better

better expedients: we follow it as thoſe do a bye way, who dare not be ſeen upon the open road.

THOUGH the depravity of men has dignified diſſimulation with ſome degree of wiſdom, yet there is undoubtedly more ſubſtantial ability proved in preventing the neceſſity of recurring to its aſſiſtance, than in all the ſkill and addreſs that are employed in the management of it: as exquiſite generalſhip is ſhewn much more by overcoming the enemy without fighting, than by hazarding the chance of battle.

A MAN converſant in diſſimulation proves his barrenneſs of prudence. This laſt acts upon the ſquare, and is not afraid of inſpection: but the man who diſſembles has only the chance of not being diſcovered.

IF we look into the precedents of antient and modern worthies, we ſhall ſee none of any eminence embracing it without

out reluctance; and however neceſſitated in their affairs, ever complaining of its weight on their minds, and ſhaking it off whenever they could accompliſh their ends without its intervention.

To put on a face of frankneſs, and aſſume an undeſigning air, in order to hide a complication of artifice, cannot tally with an upright and ingenuous diſpoſition. He that can, without feeling uneaſineſs, act ſo untrue a part, has certainly the ſeeds of falſehood deeply implanted in his heart.

Let us not, however, confound internal circumſpectfulneſs with diſſimulation. The firſt has a natural right to antecede our actions, as it acts purely on the defenſive, and is a ſafeguard and protection to ourſelves, without harbouring any views inconſiſtent with the welfare and proſperity of others: but the ſecond is founded on a determination to miſlead and inſnare. It deals in impoſition and deceit; its tendency

dency is to circumvent others; and all its motions are hoſtile and offenſive.

NOTHING is more repugnant to, and deſtructive of, the ſpirit of honour and manlineſs, than to accuſtom one's ſelf to wear a countenance different from that which one's purpoſes would naturally inſpire: it hurts the ſoul, in the ſame proportion as the long practice of a diſtorted poſition detriments the body by miſ ſhaping it.

'TIS a great misfortune ever to have recourſe to ſubterfuge and evaſion: but 'tis a much greater to arrive at ſkilfulneſs and dexterity in ſo baſe an art. While it diſgraces the underſtanding, it ſeldom fails to effect, if not a total corruption of the heart, at leaſt a conſiderable diminution of its worth and dignity. In ſpite of the encomiums beſtowed on it by ſhallow minds, it entitles the poſſeſſor to no better an appellation than that of an adept in the myſtery of deception.

HONOUR and truth are both of that delicate texture, that the leaſt touch wounds them. Though to diſſemble, on ſome unhappy occaſions, may be requiſite, in order to obviate an heavy calamity; yet 'tis only committing a leſſer evil, to ſave the commiſſion of a greater. 'Tis not without ſorrow and remorſe, that ſtrict honeſty accepts the aſſiſtance of artifice to extricate itſelf from ſo cruel a dilemma: like a virtuous monarch who is reduced, by the fatal neceſſity of the times, to employ undeſerving ſubjects.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

ON

DISCRETION.

KNOWLEDGE and parts may acquire admiration and a name; but diſcretion only can obtain and ſecure, what is far more eligible, intereſt, credit, and reſpect.

KNOWLEDGE is the reſult of mere ſtudy; but diſcretion is the fruit of judgement and obſervation; which are the two pillars on which men chuſe to reſt the edifice of hope and confidence.

WITH all the learning that may be collected by the application of a whole life, a man is often deemed unfit for a truſt of conſequence: while diſcretion, without affect-

affecting any parade, appears on the upper hand, and is preferred to places of eminence.

DISCRETION never ſhews its worth and dignity more than when it declines meddling with what raſhneſs and preſumption boldly attempt to perform: 'tis like a conſcientious perſon's refuſing to accept the poſſeſſion of a title and eſtate to which he knows he has no right.

BY a cautious diſcreet behaviour, we eſtabliſh an opinion of our abilities, no leſs than by a chain of uninterrupted ſucceſs. A temper averſe to engage in dubious enterprizes, indicates a conſciouſneſs of what we are able to effect, together with a determination to proceed no farther.

MEDIOCRITY of talents, with carefulneſs and circumſpection in our diſcourſe, is uſually of more weight and efficacy, than eloquence with impetuouſneſs: as a little

little with oeconomy goes farther than a great deal with profuſion.

We ſeldom indulge an impetuoſity of thought and ſpeech, without becoming violent and overbearing: a moderate capacity of arguing is more prevalent, while attended with mildneſs and complacency, becauſe men hate the very appearance of compulſion.

Discretion is produced by a coalition of care and diffidence; an equal admixture of which is neceſſary, to prevent activity from degenerating into forwardneſs.

Discretion is the reconnoitring of ourſelves and of others. Its peculiar property is to render us more ſolicitous to examine whether a ſubject is fit to be treated, than what to ſay upon it; as more judgement is ſhewn by avoiding certain topics, than by handling them in the moſt judicious manner.

People

PEOPLE are always readier to thank us for our diſcretion than our wit: we exert the one to oblige them, the other to oblige ourſelves.

WE always do ourſelves ſome ſervice by diſcretion; but ſcarce ever fail to detriment ourſelves through eagerneſs to be witty.

WIT has the empire of words and expreſſions; but diſcretion dwells within, and is more uſefully employed in regulating our thoughts. The firſt is like a ſhewy parading girl, fond of exhibiting herſelf abroad: the other, like a modeſt young woman, who ſhuns every occaſion of making her appearance too common, and ſtudies to improve herſelf in domeſtic accompliſhments at home.

WIT is led by vanity, and is ſatisfied with the empty ſound of praiſes: but diſcretion aims at more material ends, and labours

labours to gain the more ſubſtantial prizes of benevolence and friendſhip. The firſt is like a courtier, the ſummit of whoſe ambition is to enjoy the ſmiles of his ſovereign, and who is content with the bare external ſigns of royal preference and favour, without ſharing any in reality: the other is like a ſhrewd and ſubtle politician, who enters into the ſpirit of his maſter's deſigns; and by rendering himſelf ſerviceable and needful, becomes a man of importance.

LETTER XIV.

ON THE

USE OF GENIUS AND JUDGEMENT.

EXTRAORDINARY parts are like great titles. The leſs we are exalted by them, the more we are beloved and honoured: the obtruſion of either, on all perſons and occaſions, only ſerves to excite jealouſy and impatience. Theſe are ever prompt to riſe in oppoſition to a needleſs diſplay of ſuperiority, as ſubjects who think themſelves over-taxed, are apt to murmur and revolt againſt their rulers.

To over-rate our worth is to leſſen it. As men are hawk-eyed in diſcovering each other's imperfections, and equally dexterous in magnifying ſuch defects as hurt their vanity, they will make our error in one point,

point, an argument of our deficiency in many.

PEOPLE are in general ſufficiently willing to give us our due, while they are not ſufferers by it, on the one hand; and we can reſt ſatisfied with a juſt meaſure of eſtimation, on the other: but by pretending to more, we are guilty of a ſort of intellectual tyranny, which terminates in the contempt of our judgement; in the ſame manner as a political one is deſtructive of civil authority.

SELF-LOVE is always on the watch, and, like an exact calculator, never over-balances the account in favour of any one; but rather, like a tribune of the people among the Romans, is a ſevere animadvertor on the leaſt encroachment of ſuperiors upon his right.

MEN of eminent parts are often guilty of uncourteouſneſs from that very cauſe.

They ſeem to forget that an apparent conſciouſneſs of uncommon advantages, and an affectation to exhibit and publiſh their eminence, is a grievous eye-ſore to their inferiors. 'Tis like a rich man's boaſting of his opulence to ſuch as are oppreſt with poverty and diſtreſs; or like a healthy man's vaunting of his good conſtitution to thoſe who are afflicted with ſickneſs and pain.

HOWEVER great our abilities, the arrogance they inſpire is uſually much greater. Perſons who feel the extent of their capacity, cannot eaſily diveſt themſelves of the propenſity to manifeſt it. Full of the importance of their own thoughts, they think themſelves intitled to ſeize every opportunity of venting them.

THE capital defect in men of genius, is their exceſſive confidence in its ſtrength and efficacy. It renders them improvident of the means to redreſs miſtakes, from

their

their immoderate conviction of infallible ſucceſs; like an ambitious potentate who, by over-rating his power, undertakes more than he can compaſs, and finds himſelf arreſted in the middle of his career.

HENCE let us be careful to ſecure the favourable opinion of men of diſcernment and experience, ere we permit our genius to launch forth into the dangerous ocean of public inſpection.

JUDGEMENT and criticiſm are the paſſ-port of genius. Without their previous and ſtricteſt examination, we cannot promiſe ourſelves an indemnity from cenſure.

As the ſafety and grandeur of a ſtate depend on the combination of more wiſe heads than one; ſo the growth and perfection of genius is attained by the advice and conſultation of many.

IN matters of government, ill ſucceſſes areoften owing to the ſlight and diſregard ſhewn to ſpeakers of inferior note; ſo it frequently happens in the empire of genius, that a great one is loſt or perverted for not having paid the homage of docility to a leſs.

THE moſt valuable proof of real genius is to diſcern and attend to the judicious; as the true mark of a capacity to govern, in a king, is to diſtinguiſh and adviſe with men of abilities.

SUBMISSION to the ſtrictures of an able friend is, in the department of genius, what ſpiritual counſel is in the moral ſyſtem. As amendment of life and manners is the reſult of one, our thoughts and intellectual productions are rectified and improved by the other.

THE ſcale of genius is raiſed or lowered with amazing facility. A few alterations have

have eſtabliſhed the reputation of one, and the want of them have ruined that of another.

As the united voice of the majority is a tribunal from whence there is no appeal, the minuteſt reviſal ſhould antecede, in private, whatever we deſign to expoſe in public. The refuſal of its favour and countenance is a heavy depreſſion of our courage, and a grievous degradation of our talents: however acknowledged by our friends and familiars, they will ſuffer in our own conceit, after ſuch a condemnation.

THE moſt perſuaſive argument in perſons of genius is to be polite and civilized. An unpliant untractable diſpoſition and an unpoliſhed behaviour in men of illuminated underſtandings, affect us in the ſame manner as the uncouthneſs and inelegance that characteriſe the perſon and breeding of a ruſtic beauty.

UNINTELLIGIBILITY is no uncommon complaint againſt men of genius: like eagles, they affect to ſoar out of ſight, and wrap their meaning in phraſes myſterious and obſcure. Theſe indicate, however, more crudity and indigeſtion of thought, than clearneſs and ſublimity of conception.

PLAIN ſenſe, unaffectedly expreſt, is a readier method of manifeſting genius, than the moſt laboured circumlocution: as the juſt proportion and ſymmetry of the body appears more viſibly by a free and eaſy gait, than by curious and difficult poſtures.

GENIUS is a treaſure, of which if judgement has not the management, it infallibly becomes a prey to diſſipation.

GENIUS without judgement is like an eſtate belonging to a minor, of which others

others muſt have the adminiſtration, to render it of value to the proprietor.

MEN of genius are often ignorant of their own abilities, till the diſcovery of them is made by men of judgement. To theſe, according to the courſe of things, they are uſually ſubſervient: and without them, would frequently be of no ſervice either to others or to themſelves.

WE pay the tribute of admiration to genius, but that of deference to judgement.

A JUDICIOUS exertion of moderate parts is a proof of our reſpect for the public, which atones for many deficiencies.

GENIUS may often exiſt without taſte or judgement; but care and obſervation ſoon enable judgement to create an equivalent to genius.

A JUDI-

A JUDICIOUS conduct can ſupply the abſence of genius; but men of genius often have no conduct at all.

WITHOUT the concomitance of a deliberate and reflective turn of mind, genius proves unable, at the long-run, to cope with coolneſs and judgement. The firſt delights in motion without repoſe; and like one, who, to ſhew his ſwiftneſs, runs himſelf out of breath rather than not be doing, will commit extravagancies: but the ſecond allows an interval between reſt and action; and, like an experienced rider, by reſtraining a needleſs impetuoſity, preſerves his horſe's ſpeed and vigour, freſh and ready, for the critical moment of the race.

HENCE, let us conſider genius as an inſtrument, of which if we neglect to learn the uſe and practice, it ruſts and becomes a dead weight upon us, of no value and ſignification; and if improperly mana-

managed, will prove a trouble inſtead of a benefit. In the firſt inſtance, we ſhall at beſt reſemble the keepers of a magazine; ſince, ſtrictly ſpeaking, genius unexerciſed, like money unemployed, is rather in our cuſtody than in our poſſeſſion. In the ſecond, we ſhall act like the factors to a company of merchants, who, by inveſting the ſums they are intruſted with in the purchaſe of other commodities than they were directed, in lieu of perquiſites and commiſſions, render themſelves, by this contravention of their conſtituents orders, liable to penalties and loſſes.

LET-

LETTER XV.

ON

LABOUR AND INDUSTRY OF THE MIND.

THE talents of the mind are like lands unknown: our vigilance and ſelf-trial, like ſkilful navigators, enable us to diſcover them; and our labour and aſſiduity, like an induſtrious colony, undertake their improvement and cultivation.

EXPERIENCE is the pilot we muſt employ to ſound the depth and take the bearings of our underſtanding: like an uncertain and dangerous ſea, unequally ſhallow and profound, it is in moſt men full of inconſiſtencies and inequalities.

WHEN we have, by a thorough examination, aſcertained our intellectual gifts and poſſeſſions, we receive the ſame ſatiſfaction, as on the ſettlement of a dubious law-

law-ſuit. They become, like an undiſputed patrimony, entirely ſubject to our will and option, either to waſte and neglect, or to increaſe and ameliorate.

PEOPLE meet with a number of difficulties in life, much leſs from a deficiency of abilities, than from having, through want of ſelf-inſpection, miſtaken the plan which nature had originally intended for their purſuit.

ANOTHER cauſe of miſcarriage is, not ſo much the neglect and non-exertion of our talents, as the never trying them to the utmoſt: few men, or none perhaps, ever knew the full extent of their capacity.

As this ſcrutiny requires more than ordinary toil and trouble, and a greater degree of nicety in our obſervations than the generality of men are willing to beſtow, we paſs it by; in the ſame manner as the indolent poſſeſſor of an eſtate is averſe to examine the means of improving it.

HENCE

HENCE it is that our endeavours are ſeldom adequately reſolute and earneſt, in proportion to the attainment of our ends: we are warm in the formation of our deſigns; but often as cold in their execution, as if we acted for the concern of others.

THE truth is, that in the proſecution of their various ſchemes, men are deſirous of uniting their eaſe and intereſt, which, like two agreeable companions, render the journey of life ſmooth and pleaſant: but as theſe, like men of different aims and opinions, do not always agree, it often becomes neceſſary to part with one, in order to retain the other. Now, as preſent gratification is the powerfulleſt argument with moſt perſons, the charms of eaſe, which offers immediate enjoyment, prevail over the diſtant promiſes of intereſt: we often reſign the moſt conſiderable expectations in future, for momentary pleaſure at hand; like men who raſhly make over their nobleſt reverſions for a trifling gratuity.

A MAIN obſtruction to ſucceſs is our forgetfulneſs to anticipate, by a cool review and calculation, the hardſhips and obſtacles that will probably attend the enterprize we go upon.

INSTEAD of this indiſpenſible premeditation, we uſually begin by repreſenting to our imagination all the flattering pictures and gilded viſions that can inſpire us with a determination to proceed: and thus it is, that, after ſetting out with confidence, we are arreſted by deſpondency.

RESOLUTION proceeds from an impartial weighing of the motives that induce us to engage in any undertaking, together with the evidence of their propriety. When theſe have been duly conſidered, and the ſcale of reaſonable expectation preponderates in favour of ſucceſs, then will perſeverance have a ſolid foundation.

THE principal opponent and retarder of all enterprizes, is indolence; which, like a do-

a domeſtic enemy, clogs the motions of the ſtate at home, and prevents its influence and operations abroad.

COMPETITION is like a field of battle, where the victory is won, not by the poſſeſſion, but the exertion of the powers we have; and where he who ſtrives moſt, generally comes off the conqueror.

IN every kind of ſtrife, advantages are much ſeldomer gained by any manifeſt and viſible ſuperiority of parts, than by ſurmounting our proneneſs to inactivity, and rouſing our faculties to action.

CAPACITY for labour and induſtry is the univerſal charter of all claſſes and conditions: 'tis the tenure by which mankind holds every donation of nature.

EXTRAORDINARY gifts and qualifications are like ſpecial warrants; which authorize thoſe who receive them to put ſome particular purport in execution, and entitle

entitle them to reſpect and diſtinction, in order to give weight and dignity to their errand.

But as uncommon privileges and conceſſions ſhould not be frequent in the political ſyſtem, no more are they ſo in the ordinary courſe of Nature: her general intention is, that the diſcovery of her treaſures, and the uſe of her bleſſings, ſhould be the recompence and property of application and aſſiduity.

Activity ſoon enables us to ceaſe the complaint, ſo groundleſs and untrue in the mouth of moſt men, that Nature has denied them abilities. 'Tis ſloth and averſeneſs to beſtir ourſelves, that keep them concealed from our knowledge; like a negligent ſteward who hides from his maſter the real ſituation of his affairs. As cultivation only can decide on the barrenneſs or fertility of lands, ſo it is by trial only that we can prove our talents or defects.

THE ſlendereſt abilities, in the poſſeſſion of an induſtrious man, are like a ſmall army under the command of a ſkilful general: though he may not perform great exploits, he will acquit himſelf with honour, and do ſervice to the cauſe he maintains.

IN the ſame manner, the judicious employment of our parts, however inconſiderable, if it will not carry us to the ſummit of grandeur and proſperity, will yet enable us to go ſucceſsfully through the duties of our vocation.

THE moſt ſplendid capacity is, on the contrary, while unſeconded by cultivation, like a fertile country in the poſſeſſion of an idle people, who by their neglect and lazineſs remain in a ſtate of indigence.

THROUGH negligence and want of improvement, the brighteſt qualifications are thoſe preciſely that avail us leaſt: as

the beautifulleſt plants, for want of timely care, prove always of leaſt value. We gradually become unequal to our ſupport, and dwindle into objects of general ſlight and contempt. Theſe we never fail to experience, as well as to deſerve, in proportion as we have had the means of procuring eſteem and reſpect.

THE reaſon why indolence is the moſt pernicious of all vices, is, that it not only hinders the exerciſe of every good quality, but even ſuppreſſes the very deſire and native appetency to action, and throws all the faculties into a ſtate of lethargy. While we remain active, even the very averſion to ſloth is a principle from whence much good may flow. It is a diſpoſition that will never fail to ſecure to us well-wiſhers; and at length to promote our intereſt. But, whenever our character is branded with inactivity, our expectations of thriving become abſurd; as the hopes and aid of our friends are jointly at an end.

LETTER XVI.

ON

EMULATION.

YOU cannot be too frequently taken up in the review and contemplation of meritorious actions. The praiſe and glory reſulting from tranſcendent worth, is a ſpur that is felt even by the moſt inſenſible. It kindles in generous natures that happy ſpirit of emulation, which cheriſhes and matures the growth of every latent ſeed of merit and perfection.

WHILE attention is ſtruck with the ſplendor that accompanies great deeds, ſelf-love is ruminating how to partake of the prize; and, through the conſciouſneſs of its value, incites us to deſerve it.

EMULATION is the touchſtone of a capacious

cious mind, which is naturally attracted by the ſympathy ſubſiſting between great examples and great abilities.

A LOFTY ſoul feels at the ſight of what is praiſe-worthy, a ſort of cogeniality with its own diſpoſition; as the individuals of a family are known by a ſimilitude of features.

EXAMPLES, like proclamations, are ſet up in the public view of men, to let them know their duty; and that no one may complain of wanting means of information.

LAWS are the text, and examples the commentary that explain them.

EXAMPLES, like compariſons in poetry, are an illuſtration of the ſubject in queſtion.

THE imitation of great examples has in

all times formed the character of eminent men. Heroes would never have exiſted, but for the deſire of ſurpaſſing others, or of not being ſurpaſſed themſelves.

THE moſt complete ſpeculations on our duty affect only the judgement; we ſeldom proceed to action till the imagination is warmed; and this is only done by the force of example.

As pictures drawn from the life exhibit a much better reſemblance of perſons than all the deſcriptions given in words; examples, in the like manner, more fully repreſent what we are to do, than any verbal inſtruction.

HENCE let our memory be well ſtored with thoſe paſſages in the lives of excellent men, that have endeared them to their own, and rendered them famous to after times.

A JUDICIOUS ſelection of deeds worthy imitation, would compoſe as perfect and uſeful

uſeful a body of practical morality, as could be deſired, for the regulation of manners, and the improvement of ſociety.

We ſcarce read of a man renowned in any capacity whatever, who did not primitively rouſe himſelf by a ſpirit of emulation.

Emulation is a ſcorn of inferiority, that ſummons all our talents to the keeneſt exertion.

'Tis the ſtrongeſt proof of our own merit; for unleſs we had ſome ourſelves, we could not be ſenſible of it in others.

We cannot too ſtudiouſly patronize that fervency of mind which leads us to excel others; for if we do not ſucceed in that, we are ſure at the worſt of ameliorating ourſelves.

We ſhall even always obtain ſome part of our aim; for if we ſhould not out ſtrip

thoſe whom we firſt propoſed, we certainly ſhall many others.

EMULATION inſpires us with an acuteneſs that enlightens the proſecution of our deſigns, and animates our efforts to ſurpaſs competitors: like rival generals, who loſe no advantages, and make the moſt of every opportunity, we leave no qualification unemployed, and try all our abilities to the utmoſt.

THE warmth of emulation is to the ſoul, what artificial heat is to plants. It produces life and vigour, where none otherwiſe would have exiſted; and brings forth fruits that, without it, would never have grown in the ſoil that is made to bear them.

WERE it not for emulation, mere neceſſity would be the rule and limit of our labours. All things would wear the face of imperfection and rudeneſs, and we ſhould

ſhould ſtill remain in our priſtine ſtate of ignorance and barbarity.

THE knowledge of our own capacity depends on emulation. It forces us to ſearch within ourſelves for all the help and aſſiſtance we can find there, in order not to be overcome.

PRIDE and vanity act the part of beſiegers on this occaſion, and oblige us, like a garriſon hard beſet, and unwilling to ſurrender, to ſeek out and viſit narrowly every ſecret ſpot and every hidden receſs where ſtores and ammunition may poſſibly lie concealed.

EMULATION is like the colliſion of flints, and produces a fire that is quickly communicated wherever it finds any ſuſceptibility of impreſſion. Like lightning, it flaſhes through the deepeſt obſcurity, and diſcloſes faculties, of which common perception was not aware.

OUR

OUR endeavours are never more ſpirited and earneſt, than when the ſtriſe is for ſuperiority. Paſſion and reaſon act in concert; we are guided by all the coolneſs and circumſpection of the one, and impelled by all the fire and impetuoſity of the other.

No motives can influence human nature more powerfully than thoſe which flow from emulation. Our ſelf-love is then more peculiarly at ſtake Our views are not merely confined to the ſingle object that occupies us: Ambition ſteps in, and ſtrains every nerve to be foremoſt in the field of competition.

THE ſhame of being out-done, ſounds, as it were, an alarm to the ſoul, which rouſes all its attention. It inſtantly collects its whole capacity; as an army, on hearing of the enemy's approach, calls in every detachment, and muſters all its force for battle.

How

How often, when all other motives have wanted prevalence, has the dread of incurring ſhame from the ſuper-eminence of others, raiſed us from a ſtate of ſupineneſs, revived our dormant qualities, and given additional powers to our whole ſyſtem!

EMULATION creates and keeps alive the nobleſt deſigns and purſuits of men. 'Tis the balance of power throughout human nature; and preſerves the moral and intellectual character of poliſhed nations on a reſpectable level.

EMULATION is the parent and nurſe of merit and reputation, in the ſame proportion as indolence is the ſource of meanneſs and contempt.

ZEAL, activity, vigilance, and induſtry, are the children of emulation; and, like the generous offspring of an illuſtrious ſtem, do honour to their origin, by their fidelity to the cauſe they maintain.

THE

THE ſovereign and infallible efficacy of emulation ariſes from its incompatibility with ſloth or negligence.

IN the ſame meaſure as theſe depreſs and ſink us in apathy, and render us liſtleſs and inobſervant, the other awakens our attention, and ſharpens our ſight, to diſcover the qualifications and accompliſhments of others; in order to ſet ourſelves on a parity of worth, by a laudable imitation.

BY perſeveringly bringing ourſelves to the teſt of every experiment, we happily diſcover at laſt ſome native endowment, long unnoticed; which makes ample amends for deficiencies, and fully rewards the diligence we have employed in ſearching it: like diggers in a mine, whoſe riches lie deep, by patience and aſſiduity, meet finally with an adequate recompence for all their labour.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

ON CONTENTMENT AND MODERATION.

IT cannot be denied that ſerenity of mind is partly conſtitutional, and depends in ſome meaſure on the ſituation our body is in; whether in a ſtate of health or ſickneſs, of eaſe or ſuffering.

MUCH, however, is left in this matter to our own effecting. When we complain of inward perturbation, we ſurely muſt be conſcious, that, a few caſes excepted, a remedy is at hand, if we are willing to take a little trouble to procure it.

REFLECTION is an oracle, which men need not go far to conſult; and there are few

few mental infirmities for which it affords not a certain, and generally a ſpeedy cure.

MOST of the agitations of the ſoul ariſe from internal cauſes: external ones, excepting corporeal pain, have ſcarce any influence, unleſs by our own conſent.

WE are almoſt always our own tormentors; by yielding to deluſion, and viewing things in the light that is given them by the caprice and wantonneſs of imagination, inſtead of attending to that which proceeds from cool thinking.

THIS ſeldom is allowed any ſuffrage, where the paſſions have the aſcendency. Theſe admit of nothing that can thwart their impetuoſity. They reſemble a pernicious favourite, who, intent upon ingroſſing the whole confidence of his ſovereign, excludes whoever refuſes to co-operate with his own meaſures.

THOUGHT

THOUGHT and conſideration are generally treated like the counſellors of a froward prince; who allows them weight, while they coincide with his opinions; but, if they happen to differ, immediately diſcards them.

BY a continual adherence to falſe notions, we at length become incapable of enjoying mental tranquillity; as by a long courſe of wrong and miſtaken medicines, we oftentimes totally ruin our conſtitution.

THE various modes of diverſion we have recourſe to, in order to efface the remembrance, or deaden the ſenſation of croſſes and vexations, may perhaps induce a temporary ſuſpenſion of diſquietude: but they are at beſt a palliative, that may diſperſe the humours for a while, but never effects a complete cure.

WHEN

WHEN diſſipation is recurred to inſtead of ſerious reaſoning, 'tis like a patient's preferring a ſpecious mountebank to a regular-bred phyſician.

REASON, like a ſolemn monitor, has an air of buſineſs and gravity, that frights the levity and airineſs of unthinking people. They hearken to advice, as young prodigal heirs look to their accounts; which are ſeldom ſeen in any other light than that of intruſive gueſts, whoſe preſence diſturbs the pleaſure and entertainment of the company.

IN theſe reſpects, mankind may be ſaid to treat reaſon and reflection as ſchool-boys do their maſters; whoſe abſence they are always glad of.

THERE is no induſtry greater than that of ſome people to create and diſcover cauſes of uneaſineſs and diſcontent. Their ſelfiſhneſs or vanity are indefatigable in

repreſenting to them the various enjoyments, from which they are debarred by the malignity of fate, and intitled to by the indiſputableneſs of their merit.

CERTAIN it is, however, that moſt of our complaints of hardſhips and injuſtice are founded either on the over-weening opinion of our deſerts, or on the neglect of thoſe means to redreſs our pretended grievances, that are put into the hands of all men indiſcriminately.

HAPPINESS is like a country famous for its fertility and excellencies of every kind; wherein we have all an equal right of reſiding; and the road to which lies open to all who are deſirous to aſſert their common privilege.

BUT there is a ſet of neceſſary directions which we muſt learn and follow, before we can promiſe ourſelves to reach the end of our journey; otherwiſe we ſhall wander

wide of the mark; and, inſtead of felicity, we ſhall deviate into the immenſe wilds of errors and perplexities.

IF we arraign ourſelves before the tribunal of candid ſelf-examination, and call to a faithful remembrance all the opportunities we have neglected, and all thoſe that remain unimproved, perhaps no man can juſtly lay the blame on fate, ſo much as on himſelf, if he has been involved in difficulties; or, if he ſtill continues unfortunate, can deny 'tis the effect of his own miſmanagement.

THERE is no ſituation but allows of more alleviation than we are willing to own. Pride is above admonition, and will not condeſcend to neceſſary compliances. Thus we are venting our execration on Fortune, when we ſhould be accuſing our own unwillingneſs to adopt the meaſures ſhe has planned for us.

THE

THE fact is, that we are leſs taken up in making the moſt of our condition, than in contriving how to change it for what we wrongly conceive will prove a better; like thoughtleſs giddy youths, who forſake eaſe and plenty at home, in hopes of finding greater riches abroad.

THE fundamental error throughout our whole life is, that we do not in reality make happineſs the final aim of our endeavours. Without peace of mind, and moderation of deſires, no one can be happy; but we have generally ſomething in view that is inimical to both.

PEACE of mind does not ſo much conſiſt in abſolute tranquility and exemption from ſolicitude, as in a manly reſignation to our deſtiny, and a cheerful employment of our faculties. Moderation is leſs an abſence of deſire to poſſeſs thoſe objects which are worth having, than a placid enjoyment of thoſe we have.

IN order to obtain peace and contentment, we muſt be active and laborious.

THE weight of ſome things through long habit is hardly felt; but the longer we ſubmit to that of idleneſs, the more it becomes intolerable. The burthen of labour we ſoon experience to be lighter than we apprehended; and to reſemble ſome objects, which look large at a diſtance, but are leſſened by proximity.

AS nature has ſo framed us, that we cannot be peaceable nor ſatisfied unleſs in a ſtate of activity, either in theory or practice; our minds, continually intent on ſome deſign, are ſeeking for action in the midſt of reſt; and would be miſerable, were they cut off from the proſpect and expectation of buſineſs.

WHILE our faculties are in motion, our mind enjoys the greateſt ſerenity; and, as the more we keep ourſelves employed, the

the leſs we reliſh indolence, we ſoon contract that temper and diſpoſition to which only happineſs can belong; an averſion to loſs of time reſulting from the pleaſure we feel in converting it to proper uſe; and an aptitude to taſte repoſe, from the gratefulneſs of its viciſſitude after labour.

When we caſt our eyes abroad, and review the various claſſes of life, we readily agree, that none are debarred the acquiſition of content; and yet, when we look at home, we can always meet with ſomething to obſtruct its entrance.

We can diſplay our eloquence and ingenuity in ſhewing that mankind has the power of making cheerfulneſs the companion of adverſity and want; and yet in the midſt of eaſe and opulence, we know the ſecret of being diſcomforted.

Even ſickneſs and the infirmities incident to our nature are repreſented as un-

able to exclude interior tranquility. Yet how often, in ſpite of health and vigour, are we guilty of lamenting the defects of our conſtitution.

NOTHING has been more amply proved than our capacity for happineſs; nothing more frequently diſproved than the ſolidity of our enjoyments.

No word is ever uſed in more inſtances, and is in truth applicable to ſo many, as that of Happineſs, ſince we may be happy in almoſt every ſituation imaginable: but the thing itſelf is what by our conduct we ſeem ſtudiouſly to keep at a diſtance.

HAPPINESS, like a pacific neighbour, is willing to enter into an alliance and confederacy; but we ſtand, as it were, on punctilios, and, like unſkilful negociators, refuſe to treat for want of a few trifling formalities.

HAPPINESS offers itſelf to the friendſhip and intimacy of all; but is denied admit-

admittance, for refuſing to pay homage to Caprice; who, like a falſe friend, ſtands in the way of union, and prevents reconciliation, unleſs his own intereſt is firſt conſulted.

We are all willing to be happy; but then it muſt be on our own terms, which are commonly very unreaſonable.

In thoſe ideas of happineſs with which we amuſe ourſelves, vanity, ſelfiſhneſs, and inconſiſtency, have the direction of the pencil; and generally form ſuch pictures, as probability can give no ſanction to.

Nothing is more common than to acknowledge the unreaſonableneſs of our deſires; and yet nothing more common than to continue as fixed and wedded to them, as if we had a right to be unreaſonable.

Hence it is that a man's wiſhes and expectations ſeldom go together.

BUT the worſt is, that we carry into practice the follies of our theory; and after having laid the plan of our hopes on the foundation of fancy, we proceed as if it were grounded on reaſon.

SELFISHNESS is never ſatisfied, and is always leſs delighted with its own acquiſitions, than diſpleaſed at thoſe of others.

VANITY thinks its portion unworthy of its own importance; and aims perpetually at doing itſelf compleater juſtice.

INCONSISTENCY, the follower and ſlave of both, to remedy the deficiencies they complain of, exerts all its powers, and perverts imagination, judgement, and common-ſenſe, in order to give them ſatisfaction.

IMAGINATION is let looſe, and ſuffered to run wild; judgement is hoodwinked, and

and led by whim and fancy; and common-ſenſe is ſilenced, and deprived of all manner of ſuffrage.

In this ſituation is every man who indulges a propenſity to look forward in ſlight and diſcontent at his preſent ſtate. We have all more or leſs ſome tincture of this infatuation; which, like a bitter ingredient of great force, however inconſiderable in quantity, is able to ſour the whole maſs of life, and render ineffectual the drift and purpoſe of all that Fortune has done in our favour.

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CONCLUSION.

AFTER leading you through an examination of the principal virtues and vices that adorn or disgrace human nature, and of the chief qualifications and failings that render men amiable or disagreeable, we may conclude by a summary recapitulation of what has been laid before you in the foregoing Epistles, if one may so intitle them.

THEIR main intent is to confirm you in the persuasion of the necessity of being completely virtuous, in order to be completely happy. In proportion as we approach to perfection, or depart from it, we shall experience contentment or dissatisfaction.

You are now, therefore, to form a steady resolution of never swerving from those rules

rules of acting which you have been taught with ſo much care, from an experimental conviction, that you cannot without them perform the journey of life with credit and applauſe from others, and the more ſubſtantial comfort of approbation from yourſelf.

Above all things, be convinced that men look to the heart more than to the head; the goodneſs of the latter inſtead of apologiſing for the badneſs of the former, will render us more liable to ſcorn and deteſtation.

To ſhine in public, and carry the prize of wit and extraordinary abilities, is certainly deſerving of praiſe, while we thereby propoſe the lawful ſervice of ourſelves or of others: but when the final motive is iniquitous, we only lay ourſelves open to hatred and contempt.

However conſiderable the perquiſites of villany may prove, and however conſpicuous

ſpicuous they may render our ſtation, internal peace, without which there is no felicity, never is the portion of thoſe who act a part which their conſcience cannot approve.

WHATEVER hardſhip and diſtreſs a ſtrict adherence to honeſty may reduce us to, the burden is not ſo heavy as that with which the ſenſe of guilt will oppreſs us. What is more common than to ſee the livelieſt chearfulneſs in the midſt of want, and, on the contrary, gloomineſs and dejection in the boſom of plenty; the firſt reſulting from innocence, the ſecond from remorſe?

LET us not be deceived by the glitter of appearances: they are often aſſumed in order to hide a bad cauſe. Many a one puts on an air of gaiety and eaſe, whoſe heart, if expoſed to view, would aſtoniſh us at the poſſibility of diſſembling ſo much miſery,

miſery, and concealing it under ſo fair a maſk.

EVIL carries with it an infallible puniſhment. As it is contrary to our nature, we can enjoy no reſt, and it operates on our minds as poiſon on our bodies, which cannot be eaſy until it is expelled.

VIRTUE, on the other hand, never fails to prove the principal part of its reward; by infuſing ſerenity, and precluding the agitations ariſing from paſſions that are not kept in due ſubjection.

THE point that has been chiefly laboured in the preceding Eſſays, was to convince you, that an unguarded indulgence in our deſires, is the principal ſource of miſery and vexation.

WHEN we are happily arrived at that ſituation of mind which can look with calm-

calmneſs on thoſe objects towards which uſually our appetites hurry us with violence, we then may congratulate ourſelves, as travellers that have compleated the better half of their journey.

It cannot be too often repeated in your thoughts, that happineſs conſiſts much leſs in the obtaining of our wiſhes, than in making the moſt of what we already poſſeſs.

When we have conquered that inordinate proneneſs to what is out of our power, we ſhall be the abler to look at home on thoſe things which Fortune has put into our hands.

The generality of men delight in laying-out plans of deſirable contingencies. In this they have as ſure a guide to rely upon, as a mariner who ſhould attempt to calculate the length of time he deſigned for his voyage, together with the favourable

ble or contrary winds that might befal him while it laſted.

THE ſole principle on which to build felicity, is conſequently to employ the preſent hour; and not to flatter yourſelf with precarious expectations of better to come.

MORE diſappointments happen through the weak reliance formed upon alluring proſpects, than from any other cauſe.

THEY are often like a ſun-ſhiny morning, full of the brighteſt promiſes of fair weather; but deceitfully antecedent to rainy and tempeſtuous days.

THESE reflections are not intended to daſh your hopes: on the contrary, they are meant as the only ſolid foundation of reaſonable hope; which, as it is the moſt agreeable ſenſation to our nature, we ought

ought to render, as much as poſſible, ſecure and permanent.

NOTHING ſooner leads to deſpondency than hope improperly indulged. To be thrown from towering expectations, and to find one-ſelf in diſtreſs where we promiſed ourſelves undoubted ſucceſs, is like being caſt from the top of a precipice: our faculties are ſtunned, as it were, by unexpected calamity; and it is with difficulty our minds recover from the ſudden fall.

LET the moſt lively and chearful hope be familiar to your heart; and learn betimes to face adverſity with courage: but be as cautious not to ſuffer hope to degenerate into confidence; which, like a falſe friend, will promiſe moſt and perform leaſt.

IF we would go ſecurely through the world, let us not too fondly cheriſh the probability of our wiſhes: let us ſometimes

times call in the help of diffidence, as a counterpoize to that ſanguine forwardneſs, which is ſo apt to create perplexities where circumſpection would have found none, or would have eaſily overcome any.

Though Diffidence may be a timid counſellor, and rather inclined to repreſent things in an unfavourable light, ſtill he will not lead you into error, by deſcribing as practicable that which is impoſſible to effect, and therefore vain to attempt.

The beſt counſels you will receive, muſt be produced by your own obſervations on the conduct of men.

He that aſks advice, ſeldom intends to be wholly directed by it. This would ſuppoſe that others know his affairs better than himſelf; which is falſe to a proverb.

Yet nothing denotes a wiſe man more than readineſs to conſult, and docility to hearken to inſtruction. But in order to make proper uſe of the experience and

good ſenſe of others, we muſt be well prepared and ſeaſoned, by timely reflections on thoſe tranſactions to which we have been witneſſes, and on the character of thoſe who acted in them: in a word, we muſt have ſtudied men and things, as far as they came within our cogniſance. Without this neceſſary preparation, the directions we receive, will turn out of little more effect than weapons intruſted to the hands of thoſe who never learned their uſe.

THE ſtudy of mankind is the moſt profitable in the courſe of life and buſineſs, but there is no ſtudy that requires ſo unremitting an application.

IT is a common notion, that to dwell among men, and to be converſant in the various affairs of the world, intitles a man to the knowledge of human nature; yet we daily ſee perſons grown grey in the different drudgeries of life, raw and inexpert in very eſſential points.

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THE reaſon is, that the generality give themſelves little or no trouble in the examination of events, and the diſcrimination of characters. They are willing to take mankind by the lump; without conſidering the immenſe difference between the appearances and the realities of men and of their actions.

MEN ſeldom agree much more than in the general outlines of nature. They are not only of contradictory makes to each other, but are at times totally inconſiſtent with themſelves.

STUDY therefore human nature not only by general ſpeculation, but by a cl[illegible] attention to every individual in particular with whom you are connected.

SUCH an inveſtigation will ſoon teach you to be leſs ſurprized at the ſtrange viciſſitudes of conduct and character you will frequently experience in the

ſame perſon, than to find any man gifted with uniformity at all ſeaſons.

In your examination of individuals include your own, ſo far as it relates to the ſubject of your enquiry.

We ſeldom pronounce true verdicts on the objects of our affection or attachment. Partiality always interpoſes; it magnifies their good qualities, and diminiſhes their failings. 'Tis ſomewhat like the fondneſs of a parent for his progeny. As theſe are the children of nature, ſo are the others the children of our choice.

This partiality, however, is in ſome meaſure juſtifiable. It is our intereſt to be pleaſed with thoſe who compoſe the circle of our connections.

Where antipathy or diſaffection prevail, we are no leſs apt to form erroneous judgments; with this difference to our

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diſadvantage, that by under-rating the worth of thoſe whom we diſlike, we hurt ourſelves, by throwing them at a diſtance from reconciliation.

Before we paſs our judgment on either friends or foes, we ought to annihilate, if poſſible, all thought of ourſelves; otherwiſe, inſtead of judges, we become advocates or plaintiffs.

They for whom we feel the moſt indifference, are the likelieſt to meet with impartiality: of the characters of ſuch we always frame the cleareſt conceptions.

Let us, in the mean time, if we mean to ſpeak and act wiſely, join ſolitude to ſociety; and take it for granted, that no man can make a figure abroad, who is not company for himſelf at home.

Diſſipation of mind is the ſure conſequence of too much frequentation of

what is called Company: people who live in a round of viſitings, muſt neceſſarily loſe a very conſiderable portion of the time requiſite for the improvement of their intellects, and are accordingly found in common to be ſuperficial.

DIVIDE yourſelf, therefore, almoſt equally between the living and the dead; and reſt perſuaded, that the moſt eminent characters in active life have been as often formed upon departed, as upon exiſting models.

WHILE we are buſtling abroad in the croud, we have ſeldom coolneſs enough to attend duly to the ſolid intrinſic merit of great or good actions: but when we are alone, we collect our ſcattered thoughts, and employ them in the undiſturbed contemplation of the worthy characters that paſs in review, as it were, before a ſettled and ſtudious mind.

As the reverence of the Deity is the beginning of moral goodneſs, ſo is the love of ſtudy and reading the commencement of all mental perfection.

It is the pitiful plea of Ignorance and Pride, two intimates that ſeldom dwell aſunder, that ſpeculation uſurps and conſumes the time we ſhould beſtow upon action; and that great ſtudiers and readers are ſeldom great performers.

How ſo palpable an aſperſion ſhould have ever been countenanced, is the more ſurpriſing, as the leaſt reflection muſt inſtantly remind us, that all the improvements in arts and ſciences are no leſs due to profound ſpeculation than to aſſiduous practice.

But without condeſcending to anſwer any further ſuch frivolous cavillers, will they deny that the greateſt men of antiquity, and of modern times, have either cultivated

cultivated learning themſelves, or been the favourers of learned men?

When we conſider the multitudes that devote themſelves to indolence and vacancy of mind, we cannot be aſtoniſhed, that, conſcious of their emptineſs, they ſhould ſtrive to pull others down to their level; and endeavour to be thought equal to their ſuperiors, by giving out that application to ſtudy is of no efficacy in the formation of an accompliſhed character.

Let them rail on, in deſpite of their own conviction. The happy conſequences of diligence and ſtudiouſneſs are too evident not to put them to the bluſh, as often as they have the effrontery to aſſert ſuch notorious falſehoods.

It was thought neceſſary to forewarn you of this enmity to learning, that you might be upon your guard againſt the many votaries of idleneſs and diſſipation

who abound at preſent in this iſland, much more than ever they have done ſince the revival of literature.

LET it, however, be uppermoſt in your mind, that ſpeculation is only recommended as the aſſociate of practice: they are to be conſtant companions; otherwiſe their ſtrength and efficacy operate only by halves.

THE greateſt ſucceſſes and the greateſt diſappointments are equally produced by their union or their ſeparation: while they remain aſunder, practice works in the dark, and ſucceeds only through chance; and ſpeculation is at beſt but trying experiments.

ACCUSTOM yourſelf to caſt your thoughts and actions into the ſame mould, if one may ſo expreſs it: perform and reflect at the ſame moment.

You will in a ſhort time inure yourſelf to this method of acting, by reſiſting impetuoſity in your determinations. Without coolneſs and circumſpection, abilities are but an inlet to dangers and diſaſters.

Like other good qualities, they are attainable by perſeverance in learning them. As they are the only ſecure foundation of both public and private proſperity, you cannot be too earneſt in their acquiſition.

The concluding advice of this valedictory epiſtle ſhall be, to conſider yourſelf as an actor preparing for his firſt appearance on the ſtage. The eyes of an audience, on ſuch occaſions, are more attentive to the performance of a beginner than to the merit of a veteran. In the ſame manner, your introduction into life will be accompanied by the ſolicitude of all who are intereſted in your welfare; and no leſs by the particular notice and examination of your new acquaintance.

In the circles you will frequent, on your entrance into the world, keen and ſevere critics will be found: theſe make it their buſineſs narrowly to obſerve freſh-comers; and the judgments they pronounce, though ſometimes wrong, remain a long time uncontroverted.

To obviate the ill conſequences that will neceſſarily reſult from the unfavourable opinion of ſuch perſons, is the firſt object of your care.

The moſt effectual means to compaſs this deſirable end, is modeſty. No qualification ſits more becomingly on youth. It is a protection to his inexperience, and an ornament to the accompliſhments he may poſſeſs: without it his abilities are diſguſting and if he wants parts, he becomes inſupportable.

Modesty is equally acceptable to the ſenſible and diſcerning of both ſexes: it is an infallible proof of merit, ſince modeſty itſelf,

itſelf, if we have no other, is a very valuable quality. But it ſeldom is unaccompanied. Modeſty is the diffidence of men of ſenſe, and proceeds from cautiouſneſs; which always ſuppoſes a reflecting mind.

A MARKED deſire and care not to give offence, is the firſt ſtep to pleaſe: it proves deference and reſpect for thoſe you converſe with, and intereſts their vanity in your favour.

LET modeſty then be your motto: wear it about you, as a charm againſt the inquiſitive eye of obſervation: and finally, truſt implicitly to that experience which daily ſhews, that no character will ſooner gain us friendſhip, and preſerve us from enmity, than that of a modeſt young man.

THE END.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

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